Shawn Dove was full of doubts and apprehension about his leadership role. He was managing the national Campaign for Black Male Achievement for the Open Society Foundations, and they were working to improve the life outcomes of black men and boys. It was a daunting task, and Shawn was stressed.

The day after the campaign went public, a deluge of phone calls and emails made it clear that the demand for resources to support black males in America far exceeded the supply of CBMA’s grantmaking budget. The pressure was intense, and didn’t let up during the first year.

That’s when Shawn went to a retreat themed “Taking Care” led by Courage & Renewal facilitator Estrus Tucker.

Shawn says, “I was ready to quit and this retreat was going to be one of my last engagements in this role. But something spiritual and even spectacular happened during that retreat thanks to the powerful facilitation of Estrus Tucker.”

Over two days in an interactive circle of trust, Estrus led Shawn and the group through poetry and collaborative reflective exercises.

“The process transformed a fading spark in my heart into flame to answer the current leadership call on my life and, more important, to rise up in God’s unique purpose for my life,” said Shawn.

continued on page 4
Your Gifts At Work – in a Middle School!

Teenagers can be a handful even for a professionally trained staff.

Candace Lane, principal of Black Water Middle School, says, “In the eight hours that we’re here every day, we do so much to meet the needs of the students. We’re trying to develop healthy boundaries for children as they go through a difficult time of development.”

But in order for teachers and principals to do their jobs well and stay committed, they need to meet their own needs too. “Courage work helps teachers meet the needs they often neglect—the need for stillness, for reflection and for a safe space where they can have a voice.”

Thanks in part to your support, Candace was able to take leadership team people on a Courage & Renewal retreat for staff development. During the retreat, they discovered a renewed sense of passion and personal identity.

“Our teachers are coming alive in the classroom, bringing their true selves, which creates a safe space for students, too. Creating a culture of trust between adults and children has made a difference in the whole school community,” Candace explained.

Candace also sees Courage & Renewal changing the way her staff handles the discipline issues they face every day.

“We are looking at students through ‘soft eyes’ and trying to find ways to be helpful, not punitive.”

Embracing the idea that teachers and principals aren’t responsible for “fixing” is helping Candace’s team establish healthy boundaries that promote lifelong learning.

Candace Lane is the first recipient of the Medallion of Integrity, offered by Courage & Renewal facilitators to honor individuals who are living in congruence with their values.

Your gifts help educators like Candace build authentic leadership and trust at their schools. Imagine how much the lives of the students are positively impacted! Thank you so much for your support!

From the Executive Director

Your generous gifts provide courage and resilience to people who are working hard to make a difference. Because of you, they can continue to help their organizations and communities thrive!

What does that look like?

It happens when teachers and principals build trustworthy relationships in their middle school so that students learn and grow.

“Thanks to You!”

It happens when a Courage & Renewal facilitator inspires a non-profit leader to stay in the game so his organization can provide much-needed services.

Your gifts transform the lives of teachers, leaders, pastors and others—who in turn touch so many more lives!

Thank you!

Executive Director
Center for Courage & Renewal

Your gifts support
All of us have a need to belong. As we get further into our hectic and hurried lives, when and where do we get to just sit and share and slow down?

In 32 years of serving her church, 20 as senior pastor, Faye Orton Snyder had been searching for something deeper and life giving for her congregation, something that would create a stronger community composed of bonds of belonging among all congregants.

“Sometimes as a church we get so stuck in the history or conventions of the institution that the individual congregant takes a back seat. That’s not the way it can be.”

Faye went to her first Courage & Renewal retreat. She was introduced to the concepts of creating spaces that are open and hospitable and of connecting by sharing our personal stories. And the idea that personal growth requires both inner reflection and a community.

“I remember getting in the car, leaving after that weekend, and I was physically dizzy because it was so much what I’d been looking for and so much what I wanted for my ministry.

“I wanted to provide a safe space for people to come and listen, to come and share. I think we can be places of grace for one another and to one another.

“Through Courage & Renewal my preaching became more authentic and vulnerable. Soon I heard people at the door after Sunday worship service beginning to say, ‘We needed to hear that’ instead of ‘I needed to hear that.’ As pastor and people, we started sharing a strong sense of togetherness.”

Faye had 13 people in her congregation attend a Courage & Renewal seasonal series. “Many of them were leaders and when they came back we began to think about what we could be doing in terms of our own transformation and growth.”

“My vision is to create a sense that this group of people gathered in worship every week are meant to be together because there’s wholeness in community as well as wholeness in each individual.

“It’s important to offer Courage & Renewal principles and practices for clergy leadership. It’s such a life-giving process. When you change the lives of pastors you change their work, and when you change their work you change their community.”

Thanks to your gifts, Courage & Renewal facilitator Faye Orton Snyder is inspiring a strong sense of togetherness and transformation in her congregation.

We can be places of grace for one another.

“Your generosity helps leaders like Faye serve her community in new and powerful ways. Thank you!”

Courageous Leadership!
Academy Participants Thank You!

We thought you’d like to hear from recent participants in the Courage & Renewal Academy for Leaders. Both live in Guatemala. They’re pictured here with facilitator Rick Jackson (co-founder and senior fellow) who leads the Academy. Thank you! Your gifts made it happen!

“For all of you who made possible the experience of being part of the Academy for Leaders, I want to say thank you! It has been a great privilege and learning. I hope to share this gift in Guatemala and witness the beauty of true self emerge in the people I work with.”

—Rocio Gonzalez

“Thank you so much for helping to co-create a space for leaders who need this guidance. It has been a happy, courageous, challenging and fulfilling experience for my path in life. Your personal contribution to all the hearts who participate in this program will impact across countries and cultures when I go back to continue my journey.”

Love, peace and courage to you.
—Flor Garcia Mencos

Reflection

From Parker J. Palmer

A strong community helps people develop a sense of true self, for only in community can the self exercise and fulfill its nature: giving and taking, listening and speaking, being and doing.

[It] is never “selfish” to name, claim, and nurture true self. ... When we are rooted in true self, we can act in ways that are life-giving for us and all whose lives we touch. Whatever we do to care for true self is, in the long run, a gift to the world.

Humble as a lamb, bold as a lion!

continued from page 1 ▶

“Estrus Tucker pulled my muted voice out of me! I returned home a new man, and I have enlisted Estrus over the past five years to facilitate transformational leadership retreats for the Campaign for Black Male Achievement so that others could share in the phenomenal Courage & Renewal work.”

“Thanks to the circle of trust, I adopted a leadership mantra for my own life: humble as a lamb, bold as a lion!”

Your gifts help train facilitators like Estrus Tucker and then go on to reignite the passion of transformational leaders like Shawn Dove. Thank you!