



Glenn Loury: An Independent Mind

The Woodson Principles Applied

The Woodson Principles were developed from 40 years of experience working with effective grassroots groups that have transformed struggling neighborhoods and empowered the people within them.

Here is a list of Bob Woodson's 10 Principles:

Competence	Innovation
Integrity	Inspiration
Transparency	Agency
Resilience	Access
Witness	Grace

Which Woodson Principles does the story of Glenn Loury exemplify? Did Loury fail to employ any of the Woodson Principles that would have been beneficial? Here are some possibilities for discussion:

Competence

Look first among people suffering the problem for a solution. Then rely on the “uncertified” practical knowledge of those living in the same geographic and cultural zip code as the people experiencing the problem, instead of ivory tower ideas from distant scholarly experts. Certification is not always synonymous with qualification.

Transparency

Leaders willingly open up and share their triumphs over the challenges they have faced in their lives, describing how they overcame brokenness, and suffering. This is how they build trust. They refuse to hide behind their pain or their pride, instead offering up stories of their struggles with humility in the interest of establishing trust. We are all sinners in need of a Savior.

Witness

A witness is more powerful than an advocate, because witnesses live by the values they convey to others. Look for those who have overcome hardship. They possess more credibility with the lost and struggling than the most pedigreed, accomplished experts. For example, those who are in recovery from an addiction are living proof that recovery is possible.



Agency

No one should have to surrender his or her dignity as a condition for receiving help. Unconditional giving leads to pity rather than the desire to succeed. People should be agents of their own uplift. Never do more for them than they are willing to do for themselves. There must be reciprocity as the framework of any meaningful relationship. In other words, a person should be given the opportunity to give in return for what is received.

Access

Eliminate barriers to access and serve all who suffer. Support positive incremental change through flexible options, not directives. Always strive to be “on tap and not on top.” Expectations in the absence of opportunity are restrictive. People must be given the tools to take advantage of the opportunities presented to them.