

Relationships that Empower - Part 5

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Introduction:

A. We have been talking about empowering relationships.

B. Today we will deal with how to initiate relationships.

I. In initiating relationships several things are important.

A. When you need to be mentored identify the following:

1. What am I going through?
2. If I am beginning something new I may need a coach in this area.
3. Find someone who can help you in a particular area.
4. Pray the Lord to give you someone with a heart to help.
5. Some of the older men in Navigators look for younger men to invest in.
6. A staff came to me with a terrible upbringing in Harlem.
 - a. He asked me to help him become a good dad.
 - b. He also needed a granddad for his kids.
 - c. I referred him to another couple that loved them.
7. The need you are sensing can be met by another who had gone through what you are going through.
8. We all need to invest in others, giving of ourselves.
9. I counsel older couples to get to know younger couples and their kids.
 - a. Ask questions to get to know them.
 - b. Ask how you might pray for others.
 - c. Follow up with a phone call to see how they are doing.
 - d. Younger moms need to connect with older moms.
10. Clarify expectations.
 - a. Come prepared to ask specifics.

b. Agree on assignments like reading or journaling.

B. Attraction is important.

1. Younger people look for qualities in an older person.

a. Friendliness.

b. Godliness.

c. Expertise in an area.

4. Older people look for qualities in younger people.

a. Teachability.

b. Responsiveness.

1. If someone does not respond to your initiative set clearer expectations for your relationship.

2. Ask what kind of accountability would help you.

3. This is non-threatening and can be agreed upon by both parties.

4. You can set expectations for assignments.

5. Put a three to six month check for evaluation.

6. Be sure to evaluate.

c. Accountability; a commitment to mutually respond to one another.

1. Commitment plus time equals life change.

2. The only other way life change comes is through crisis.

3. For example a lack of a budget will get you into trouble.

II. The horizontal dimension to relationships is important.

A. The older we get the more important peer relationships become.

1. When I want to develop in an area I try to find a peer group.

2. This works well.

B. Acquaintances provide information.

1. These people we know only briefly.
2. We usually have many acquaintances.

C. Friends are important.

1. Spiritually, friends stir each other up to good works. (Hebrews 10:24-25)
 - a. Stimulation.
 - b. Encouraging..
2. Sharpening also happens. (Proverbs 27:17)
 - a. He who walks with the wise becomes wise. (Proverbs 13:20)
 - b. Old friends act as a mirror for us.
3. We get good a friend by being a good friend.
 - a. Believe in others.
 - b. Encourage others.
 1. Only one in nine friends is a good encourager.
 2. Our talk is often negative.
 - c. Give support.
 - d. Give trust.
4. The close brother or sister is important.
 - a. 70% of Americans say they have many friends but few close friends.
 - b. Women do better than men.
 - c. Two dimensions for close friendships. (Hebrews 3:12-14)
 1. Protection from sin.
 2. Encouragement to keep believing God.
 - d. Two can stand better than one. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)
 - e. Trust and safety marks good friendships.
 1. Openness.
 2. Honesty.

f. Jonathan and David were good friends. (1 Samuel 18)

1. They were one in spirit, fighting together. (1 Samuel 14; and 1 Samuel 17)

i. We need to not believe what others say about us.

ii. Our good friends know who we really are.

2. They loved each other.

3. They made a covenant with each other.

i. There are a few I have covenanted with.

ii. I am committed to them for life.

iii. They are committed to me for life.

iv. We will help each other become all Christ wants of us.

4. David needed Jonathan to help him escape from Saul. (1 Samuel 23:15)

g. I became convinced that I needed a close relationship like David and Jonathan so I began meeting with a man for mutual discipleship.

1. We bonded and moved from a vertical to a horizontal relationship like David and Jonathan.

2. We made a covenant to each other to help each other grow in our relationship to Christ.

3. One day I asked that if one of us did something contrary to God's will, how should we confront each other.

a. I have seen problem areas in others lives that took them down.

b. If we don't make ourselves vulnerable to others we will fall too.

c. I made a list of people I would hurt if I fell morally and stopped at 51.

d. I don't want to hurt any of these people.

4. I gave my friend freedom to speak into my life if he saw anything troubling in me.

- a. When I missed my son's important basketball game for a work issue my friend confronted me about it.
- b. He challenged me to not blow off my kids for work.
- c. I asked my kids if they thought I was traveling too much.
- d. I asked my kids to help me decide how to handle my new work responsibilities better.
- e. My friend's challenge became a turning point in my family life.

D. Make a relational inventory, deciding who is really in your life.

- 1. I have a coach in my life and I disciple several others.
- 2. Write down peer relationships.
 - a. Is there anyone you can share your heart with?
 - b. We need each other.
- 3. Are there some good friends you can go deeper with?
- 4. Is there someone you could invest in?
- 5. Are there areas that you need a mentor for?
- 6. The impact you make in this life will be determined by how intimate your relationships are.

III. Prayer.

- A. Father you put us on earth to be relational people.
- B. The body of Christ is built on mutual relationships.
- C. We need each other to be godly and to make life fun.
- D. Help us to become the persons you want us to be in community.
- E. We pray in the name of Jesus.