

**How to Develop Authenticity
in Your Small Group**
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HOW TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

A. WHAT IS AUTHENTICITY?

- **STARTS WITH YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. AND YOU.**

It's when the _____ mirrors the _____.

- **THEN WITH OTHERS.**

Lead from your _____.

Group Exercise

Who do you have a relationship with that has made a significant impact on you being authentic?

Specifically, what did they do that stimulated that in your life?

HOW TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

How do you grow people in authentic relationships?

B. KNOW THE FEARS THAT BLOCK AUTHENTICITY

- **THE FEAR OF _____ KEEPS US FROM BEING AUTHENTIC.**

No one really knows what anyone else is thinking or what he is really like except that person himself.
1 Corinthians 2:11 (LB)

Insincere talk that hides what you are really thinking is like a fine glaze on a cheap clay pot.
Proverbs 26:23 (GN)

1st KEY TO AUTHENTICITY:

If we live in the light, as God is in the light, we can share fellowship with each other.
1 John 1:7 (NCV)

When things are brought out into the light, then their true nature is clearly revealed.
Ephesians 5:13 (GN)

*We refuse to wear masks and play games... Rather, we keep everything we do and say out in the open,
the whole truth on display, so that those who want to can see....”*
2 Corinthians 4:2 (Msg)

- **THE FEAR OF _____ KEEPS US FROM BEING AUTHENTIC.**

The fear of human opinion disables; trusting in God protects you from that.
Proverbs 29:25 (Msg)

2nd KEY TO AUTHENTICITY:

Don't be afraid for you are deeply loved by God. Be at peace; take heart and be strong!
Daniel 10:19 (NLT)

I trust in God so I will not be afraid. What can people do to me?
Psalm 56:11 (NCV)

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- **THE FEAR OF _____ KEEPS US FROM BEING AUTHENTIC.**

My heart grew embittered and my affections dried up.

Psalm 73:21 (NJB)

All they get are days full of sadness and sorrow, and they end up sick, defeated, and angry.

Ecclesiastes 5:17 (NCV)

3rd KEY TO AUTHENTICITY:

God: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove your heart of stone.

Ezekiel 36:26 (NIV)

Once... our lives were full of resentment... We hated others and they hated us. But when the time came for the kindness and love of God our Savior to appear, then he saved us – not because we were good enough to be saved but because of His kindness – by washing away our sins and giving us the new joy...

Titus 3:3-5 (LB)

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C. REALIZE THE ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR DEVELOPING AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY

- **YOU NEED TO _____ AUTHENTICITY.**
 - ✓ Create safe environments
 - ✓ Share weaknesses as well as strengths. Not just your successes but your messes.
 - ✓ Allow silence.
 - ✓ Ask “anything else?”.

- **ASK QUESTIONS WITH _____ FOR EVERYONE TO ANSWER.**
 - ✓ Types of questions
 - ✓ Types of people

- **TALK WITH _____.**
 - ✓ Be truthful

“An honest answer is like a kiss of friendship.” Proverbs 24:26 (NLT)
 - ✓ Be thoughtful

“Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.” Ephesians 4:15 (NLT)
 - ✓ Be clear

“Just say a simple, ‘Yes, I will’ or ‘No, I won’t.’ Anything beyond this is from the evil one.” Matthew 5:37 (NLT)

HOW TO DEVELOP AUTHENTICITY IN YOUR SMALL GROUP

▪ **START SMALL – MOVE PROGRESSIVELY.**

“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities.” Luke 16:10 (NLT)

- ✓ Short accounts: Authenticity doesn’t mean you dump all your junk on people all at once or you allow your group to be a group therapy session.
- ✓ Share appropriately: Need appropriate disclosure given at the level of relationships and dynamic of the group. Take more sensitive discussions offline and have individual conversations.
- ✓ Spiritual friendships: Find 1-3 people and be intentional about letting them know you and share struggles.
- ✓ Subgroup a meeting by gender, prayer partners.
 - More intimate
 - Quiet people are more likely to share

▪ **SPEND TIME TOGETHER IN DIFFERENT WAYS – “Know and be known.”**

- ✓ John Ortberg in *Everybody’s Normal Till You Get to Know Them* he says, “You can only be loved to the extent you are known.”
- ✓ God stories
- ✓ Have fun together: sports venues, barbeques and potlucks, whatever people like to do.
- ✓ Celebrate each other (birthdays, answered prayers, potty-training).
- ✓ Serve together.

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D. REALIZE THE POWER OF _____.

▪ ENCOURAGEMENT

“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.” Hebrews 3:13 (NIV)

- ✓ Regularly look for ways to speak blessing and affirmation into people's lives

▪ RESOLVING CONFLICT

“There is no intimacy without conflict. Groups and marriages are often scared to death by conflict. So we do everything we can to avoid it. Nothing ever gets resolved, nobody grows, we just make nice.

Question: What is it in your group that's an issue but nobody wants to talk about it? This is a major barrier to real fellowship, to real relationship. The strongest marriages and the strongest groups are ones that grow through conflict and resolution. Not by pouting, not by covering up, but by dealing honestly with issues.” Rick Warren

ABC's of Conflict Resolution

Ask God for direction

Be praying for the people involved

Care enough to confront

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▪ TRUTH TELLING

“An honest answer is a sign of true friendship.” Proverbs 24:26 (TEV)

- ✓ Honesty is cultivated in an environment of authenticity.
- ✓ Honesty is earned through relationship.

“Being candid and being connected go together. Healthy relationships and healthy groups are built on honesty, not flattery.” Rick Warren

Real authenticity shows up in relationships.

Answers to fill-ins

Outside

Inside

Weaknesses

Exposure

Be Anchored in God’s Identity

Rejection

Be Secured in God’s Love

Hurt

Be Healed by God’s Spirit

Model

Time

Honesty

Words