

Handbook for Spiritual Leadership Training

Communicating Excellence Through Accountability, Disclosure & Feedback

SL Coach Trainer's Guide For Long Distance Learning

Week/Session 1 – Authentic, Transparent, Genuine

Resources:

- *Communicating Excellence Through Accountability, Disclosure & Feedback*
- *HomeWorkbook – Week/Session 1 (pdf)*
- *Discussion Handouts – Week/Session 1 (pdf)*
- *Power Point (pdf & slides)*

Before the Training: Have SL Learner read *Fundamentals of Communicating Excellence Through Accountability, Disclosure & Feedback (the first section)*.

Purpose of the Session: To help the SL Learner get a clear understanding of the driving factors behind feedback, accountability and disclosure.

Begin: Pray with your Learner. Ask,

What were some “ahah”s that came out of your reading?

What specific area in the reading was either confusing or you didn't understand?

Discussion starter: Ask, “*What are you afraid of?*” (PP1)

Use this question to demonstrate disclosure. Is it easy or difficult to talk about personal things—especially those that others may perceive as negative or display a weakness? Even tough guys and gals are afraid of something.

Discussion Exercise: The Real Deal?

Point of the Exercise: To integrate the concepts of genuine and feedback, authentic and accountability, and transparent and humility.

To your SL Learner, begin the conversation with, “*Let's pretend we're sitting across the table from each other and I show you a large clear, faceted stone in a gold setting and I ask, 'Is this a genuine diamond in an 18K gold setting?' How would do you know? Is this an authentic piece of jewelry? How do you know? How transparent is the stone?*”



Processing the Exercise: We often interchange the meaning of genuine and authentic not realizing each word has a distinct/different meaning.

- **Is it Genuine?** (PP2) Ask, “Any idea what this stone is?”

An important first question needing an answer is whether this ring is a diamond, as some would think, and is it set in gold as labeled. “How can you know this is the genuine thing?” Maybe it’s a cubic zirconium or just glass. How would you know? A simple test for diamonds is the hardness factor. Diamonds scratch other objects and this will reveal its **genuineness** and therefore reflect its **identity**. There is no such thing as a genuine fake diamond. If you don’t perceive this stone to be a genuine diamond, you wouldn’t pay a diamond price for it. Right?

- **Is it Authentic?** (PP3) “If genuine says what the stone is, we now look for its quality—its authenticity. How do we know the value of the diamond?”

If genuine refers to its identity, authentic speaks to the stone’s composition. All gold and silver ring settings include some metal alloy for strength. This is the reason jewelry is labeled 10, 14 or 18K gold or silver. 24K gold is pure and too soft for jewelry. To determine a diamond’s value, there are 4 Cs—color, clarity, cut and carat weight—to consider. All credible stones are appraised and come with a certificate of authenticity attesting to the 4 Cs. This is the stone’s integrity.

Authenticity is not about whether the ring is actually a real or a fake diamond in a gold or silver setting. This was decided when it was determined to be genuine. Authenticity is about whether it is labeled or certified correctly. Is it more impure with more occlusions than represented? Is the color range correct? Was the cut done by hand or machine? Is the setting 18K gold, 10K gold or plated nickel with gold plate on the outside? Is this an original work of art or a knock-off fake?

Authenticity addresses its **integrity**.

- **Is it Transparent?** (PP4) “If authentic describes the quality of the stone, transparency is a measure of the stone’s purity. What is a simple way to determine purity?”

A third question not easily answered of something like gold or silver in its solid state relates to transparency. But, if you heat gold to its liquid state, the dross or impurities float to the surface and when gold is pure, it is transparent. (See Rev 21:21b) For a diamond it is much easier to see and measure with a jeweler’s loupe or a microscope. If there are occlusions deflecting light or changing the color, then the diamond’s worth is considerably reduced. Transparency reflects the degree of purity.

Integrating the Concept (PP5)			
What is reflected	Genuineness	Authenticity	Transparency
What I do	Receive Feedback	Desire Accountability	Provide Disclosure
Virtue quality	Teachability	Submission	Humility
What is seen	My Identity	My Integrity	My Purity



Three Necessary Adjectives

Let's go back now and translate the diamond ring metaphor into our lives.

Genuine as it Relates to Feedback

- **Define genuine** – (PP6) Ask your SL Learner to give their own definition for genuine. Write it out as it is forming.

The distinction between genuine and authentic may be confusing at first. They may appear to be synonymous terms, and are often used interchangeably. As the trainer, it is important to spend time making sure your SL Learner understands the subtle but important difference. In defining genuine, it is what it is and is a reflection of its identity. Another way to understand it in spiritual terms is, as an image creature, I am a child of God. This is my identity and nothing can change my identity. It is a fact that I am a genuine object of God's creation. That's who I am. However, it is an altogether different consideration in my being an authentic Christian.

- **Define feedback** – Ask your SL Learner for a definition of feedback as it relates to relationships and communication. Then ask, "How does feedback verify my genuine identity?"

A point of reference is that feedback is honest information about how we are/I am being perceived. Feedback is often more accurate than our own self perceptions. A willingness and desire to receive feedback helps keep us real, i.e. genuine.

Questions for Conversation

Genuine feedback is the "real deal." In giving feedback, how do you make it genuine yet not offensive or hurtful?

Do people of other cultures receive feedback differently than what you are used to? How do you make it genuine for them?

How do you know feedback is genuine when it's given to you?

What are some things you can do to not get defensive when feedback is stinging?

How can you encourage others to give you genuine feedback?

Authentic as it Relates to Accountability

- **Define authentic** – (PP7) Ask your SL Learner to come up with their own definition of authentic.

Here's one to use as a guide. *Authentic means having integrity; that the composition of the substance is consistent and known all the way through. If something is authentic, it is irreducible or can no longer easily be separated into different parts. It is complete or it has the quality of wholeness.*

In our walk as upright Christians, we must be willing to hold ourselves up to examination to see if we're authentic; that we're the same people we've labeled ourselves to be in terms of the "4 C's" -- **color**-our uniqueness, **clarity**-able to see in and through us, **cut**-who are we trying to

emulate, and **caret weight**-are we light weights or are we full of substance. Test us. That's authentic accountability. Our authenticity, in a sense, is our "certified" label verifying our integrity. We help assure our authenticity through a willingness to submit ourselves to others to help us be accountable. If we don't have the core qualities of the virtue of Christ within us, we're not trustworthy people.

- **Read Titus 2:7-8 in the NIV.** *In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. Ask, "How does this scripture amplify your understanding of authentic?"*
- **Describe accountability in a discipling relationship** – As a guide; one definition could be, *submitting to the care/interest/concern/input/advice of another regarding our personal conduct.*

Questions for Conversation

How do you see your submission tied to authenticity?

How does authentic help put substance into the word accountability?

Perception is reality. What your ministry team does reflects back what they have seen in and about you. You may feel they don't know the facts behind your behavior, but that's all they have to try and understand. If you have been guarded or dishonest in what others see, the feedback you receive will either reflect that or transparently reveal your dishonesty. Our authenticity reflects the depth of our integrity. If we are to be accountable to another person, the genuine me will show up regardless. What is needed is for the authentic me, through and through, to show up. Ask, "What do these statements mean to you? If I am holding another person accountable, how does authentic enter in?" "What does that have to do with my integrity?"

What does the kind of submission required for an accountable relationship look like?

To be authentically accountable requires a willingness to submit.

Transparent as it Relates to Disclosure

- **Define transparent** – (PP8) Ask for a definition of transparent.

As a guide, one example would simply be *the ability or characteristic to be able to easily see through*. Transparent in a spiritual sense does not mean purity, it means the degree or extent of its purity can be seen.

The more I am willing to open my life as a book, disclosing with discretion and leaving little hidden in dark closets the more transparent I become. Transparency may reveal flaws but then that allows full disclosure.

The instrument through which you see God is your whole self. And if a man's self is not kept clean and bright, his glimpse of God will be blurred--like the Moon seen through a dirty telescope. That is why horrible nations have horrible religions; they have been looking at God through a dirty lens.
C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

- **Define disclosure** – Again, ask your SL Learner to define disclosure.

One definition could be, *revealing previously unknown information; revealing the true self.*

To be transparent in disclosure requires a confidence in whose as well as who we are. This is not a “warts and all” disclosure, but simply the courage to let others know you as well as, if not better, than you know yourself. (Most already do, so get over it!) To hide the obvious is to be known as and seen as a phony. Not a good foundation for being an influence to others.

As spiritual leaders, we are influencers. Leaders aren’t perfect, but we do model the desired, intended, expected attitudes and behaviors of a person in a state of continuous transformation.

The spiritual leader is best marked by her clear willingness to serve and to model a state of submission to God and to others as an authentic servant leader. Combine with that the leader who is so secure in whose she is that her life is an open book, giving a model and an example of transparency. Finally, a leader cannot sustain excellence without openly encouraging and welcoming sincere feedback. Out of that posture forms the foundation for trust.

Questions for Conversation

What happens when you try to be transparent without humility? Is it even possible?

How does transparent differ from translucent?

If the window to my soul is transparent, you can see in. If it’s translucent, only diffused or filtered light will be seen. What kind of filters do we usually put on?

People can usually spot or at least feel when they encounter a phony. What circumstances or emotions make it difficult to be real with others at times?

How does taking on the countenance of humility allow you to be more transparent?

Identity, Integrity & Purity

Identity, Integrity and Purity (PP9) –There are three things my friends and my enemies need to know about me.

- Whose I am--that speaks to my identity; my genuineness.
- Who I live for--that speaks for my imputed purity; my transparency
- Who is living through me--that speaks to my integrity; my authenticity
- I **belong** to the Father; I **live** for Christ; and the Holy Spirit lives **through** me.

In selecting and discipling new leaders, it is critical to discern a person’s centeredness. There is a difference between lacking confidence and trying to hide that lack with a veneer of apparent assurance. It’s deception to self and others and Satan will work on it every time.

Roles: (PP10)

What role do you play as a spiritual leader and when? Give some examples and describe how authenticity, transparency and genuineness play a part.

- **Encourager** – *What do you say when someone tells you they are having a hard time being consistent in Godly character?*
- **Mentor** – *What are some questions you can ask as a mentor to help bring out authenticity, transparency and genuineness?*
- **Coach** – *How does your conversation and questions change from mentor to coach?*
- **Supervisor** – *What are examples of responses you want to hear from a team member demonstrating authenticity, transparency and genuineness?*
- **Spiritual Leader** – *As a person of influence in someone's life, how can you demonstrate authenticity, transparency and genuineness as a reflection of your spiritual growth?*
- **Pastor/Elder** – *How can you teach/preach this topic reflecting biblical examples and relevant scripture?*

Questions for Conversation

Of the listed roles of encourager, mentor, coach, supervisor, spiritual leader, pastor/elder which one do you play most often in your ministry role? What circumstances do you find that make accountability, disclosure and feedback most difficult? Why?

Thinking about the Johari window, what specific things can you do to open your "hidden" window? Why would you want to?

Reflection: Read 2 Corinthians in light of authentic, transparent and genuine. See how Paul demonstrates these characteristics in his letter and relationship to the members of the Church at Corinth.

For the Next Session –

Have your SL Learner read *Scriptural Principles of Communicating Excellence Through Accountability, Disclosure & Feedback* (the second section) and complete the questions on the Discussion Handout worksheet prior to the scheduled conversation.

Set your next training date and time.

Ask if there is anything you can agree in prayer for.

Conclude with prayer.