

The Christian Arsenal

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HOW TO CONNECT WITH PEOPLE Essentials for 21st Century Living

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Part 4 of 9

INTRO: Even if you are connected to a church family, if you don't know how to connect to people one-on-one, you can still feel detached or disconnected. If you don't know how to connect with people, you're not going very far in life. Marriages do this. They start out as an ideal, quickly move to an ordeal, and eventually become no deal.

"A sweet friendship refreshes the soul." Pr. 27:9 (Mes)

1. **BE COURAGEOUS AND TAKE THE INITIATIVE.**

1. Why does it take courage? Because it is fear that disconnects.
2. Gen 3:10 "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."
3. Fear does 3 terrible things to relationships:
 1. It makes us defensive.
 2. Our fears keep us distant.
 3. Our fears make us demanding.
4. "For the Holy Spirit, God's gift, does not want you to be afraid of people, but to be wise and strong, and to love them and enjoy being with them." 2 Tim. 1:7 (LB)
5. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love." 1 John 4:18
6. So the starting point in connecting with anybody is to pause and pray, "God give me the courage to take the first step."

2. **BE CONSIDERATE OF THEIR NEEDS.**

1. In other words, if you want to connect with people, you've got to start with their needs not your own. Old Chinese proverb: "Seek to understand before seeking to be understood."
2. "Look out for one another's interests, not just your own." Phil. 2:4 (GN)
Two basic rules about life:

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1. The world does not revolve around you.
2. God has promised that when you focus on meeting the needs of others, He guarantees to meet yours.
3. "You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, God forgave you, so you must forgive others." Col. 3:13 (NLT)

Part of being considerate of other people's needs is making allowances for their faults.

"Love forgets mistakes." Proverbs 17:9

3. **BE CONSTRUCTIVE WITH YOUR WORDS.**

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Eph. 4:29 (NIV)

1. Sometimes with our words, it's like a sledgehammer. We swing away and all of a sudden we look around and all we've got is a pile of rubble, relational rubble.

2. So when it comes to your mouth, think of it as a power tool and be very careful with it.

3. Instructions for use of a power tool:

1. Know your power tool.
2. Keep guards in place.
3. Be careful around children.
4. Store idle tools when not in use.
5. Don't over reach
6. Never use in an explosive atmosphere.

4. How can I start using it more carefully?

1. Stop excusing
2. Talk less
3. Listen more
4. Start building

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." James 1:19 (KJV)

4. **BE CANDID ABOUT PROBLEMS IN THE RELATIONSHIP.**

"An honest answer is the sign of a true friendship." Prov. 24:26 (GN)

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3 Rules for Being Candid

1. Compliment in public, correct in private.
2. Correct when they are up and not down.
3. Never offer correction until you've proven that you're open to it.

"Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted ..." Prov. 27:5-6 (NIV)

There is no genuine intimacy without going through the tunnel of conflict.

It is in conflict that a relationship is spelled out, defined and built.

1. On the one hand is superficial intimacy.
2. On the other hand is genuine deep intimacy.

5. **BE CONFIDENTIAL WITH INFORMATION.**

1. "A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret." Prov 11:13 (NIV)

Definition of Gossip: It is talking about a situation with somebody who is neither a part of the solution or a part of the problem.

2. 3 Things you should ask before you tell something:
 1. Is it true?
 2. Is it kind?
 3. Is it necessary?

6. **BE COMMITTED TO THE RELATIONSHIP.**

The same God who raises the dead can raise a dead relationship if you're willing to be changed.

"A friend loves at all times." Prov. 17:17 (NIV)

When you're blowing it and you're making a mistake, friends are in your corner when you're cornered.

They walk in when everybody else walks out.

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Prov. 18:24 (NIV)

One good friendship is worth ten thousand acquaintances.

Let me remind you that the ultimate issue in life is not accomplishments, but relationships.

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The question is where am I going to get that type of relationship?

I am convinced more than ever before that God made the church to meet your deepest needs that cannot be met anywhere else.

Larry Crabb – Quote from Connecting:

“When two people really connect something is poured out of one and into the other that has the power to heal the soul of its deepest wounds and restores it to health. The one who receives experiences the joy of being healed and the one who gives knows even greater joy of being used to heal. Something good is in the heart of each of God’s children that is far more powerful than everything bad in the world. It’s there waiting to be released and work its magic. But you have to be connected.”