

COACHING TIPS:

TIP #4: ASKING QUESTIONS

REMEMBER:

These coaching tips are also about practicing as well. Don't just read the coaching tips and move on. Try to practice it in your everyday. Talk with your fellow GC brothers and sisters about what you've been struggling with or succeeding in. Encourage one another as you do life together.



You've noticed another, been praying for them, are listening to them. What's next? Asking great questions.

In the book *Practicing the 9 Arts of Spiritual Conversations*, the authors talk about asking questions. In 2009, a study was done that showed that when we are curious, it directly correlated with a high level of brain activity. When people were curious about a question, the part of the brain that was linked with learning and memory was engaged.

What does all that mean?

"A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion."

Proverbs 18:2

"An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge."

Proverbs 18:15

"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus..."

Philippians 2:3-5

When we care about someone, we are motivated to know more, to understand, to go deeper. Curiosity in relationships is the humble and sincere interest to know and care for another. And in order to do this, we need to ask questions.

Mary Schaller writes, “Holy’ curiosity toward another person involves choice. We choose to notice people, allow them to matter to us, and extend love to them.” And in order to be effective in loving another, you need to know more about them – therefore, you ask questions.

If this is the case, why don’t we? Perhaps we fear stirring up issues without having any answers. Perhaps it’s because we don’t have the time to listen – we are always in a hurry. Perhaps we think that our questions can be seen as too intrusive. The biggest reason seems to be that we come into a conversation with our own agenda. We make judgments and we try to “fix” the other person. However, Colossians 4:5-6 counsels us to be wise, where our conversation should be full of grace.

So, how do we improve? We can begin by asking open-ended questions and exploratory questions. The “what, why or why” types of questions. But, instead of using these types of questions to get at an answer, it’s about giving the other person the space to tell their stories – because it can help them to feel loved and empowered... this will then help us to go deeper with them.

By asking questions, we can connect with their story and that builds strong relationships of trust with each other.

PRACTICE: DEVELOPING HEALTHY SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS

1. HOW CAN YOU CULTIVATE YOUR CURIOSITY ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE? HERE’S AN EXERCISE TO TRY. LOOK AT YOUR HANDS, WRITE DOWN AT LEAST TEN QUESTIONS THAT ARISE FROM YOUR OWN CURIOSITY ABOUT YOUR HAND. NEXT, TRY THAT WITH SOMETHING ELSE... LIKE A TREE – WHERE DID ITS SEED COME FROM? HOW OLD IS IT? HOW DEEP ARE THE ROOTS, ETC?

FINALLY, TRY IT WITH SOMEONE ELSE.

2. PRACTICE ASKING OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS – QUESTIONS THAT REQUIRE MORE THAN A YES OR NO ANSWER - IN ONE OF YOUR CONVERSATIONS THIS WEEK. WHAT WENT WELL? WHAT FELT AWKWARD? REMEMBER, THIS ISN’T ABOUT HOW MANY QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK, BUT ABOUT LETTING THEM TRUST YOU WITH PARTS OF THEIR STORY.

3. SHARE DURING SCHEDULE C WITH YOUR GC ABOUT HOW IT WENT ASKING QUESTIONS. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES? WHAT DID YOU DISCOVER ABOUT THE OTHER PERSON THAT YOU DIDN’T KNOW BEFORE? WHERE CAN YOU IMPROVE YOUR ASKING QUESTION SKILLS?