

COACHING TIPS:

TIP #5: ART OF LOVING

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.

1 JOHN 4:16-20

16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us.

God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in

him. 17 By this is love perfected

with us, so that we may have

confidence for the day of

judgment, because as he is so also

are we in this world. 18 There is no

fear in love, but perfect love casts

out fear. For fear has to do with

punishment, and whoever fears has

not been perfected in love. 19 We

love because he first loved us. 20

If anyone says, "I love God," and

hates his brother, he is a liar; for

he who does not love his brother

whom he has seen cannot love God

whom he has not seen.

LOVE BINDS TOGETHER

Now that you've gone through the first 4 of the 9 arts of spiritual conversations, you have to ask what

brings it all together? And it is love... more specifically God's love.

God's love binds together noticing, praying, listening, and asking questions. If you think about it, we are created in the image of God. Therefore, we love what God loves. And He is love. Our souls were designed to not just receive love, but to also give love to others.

But too often, we find that we judge rather than love. Yet, the constant reminder before us is that despite our shortcomings, God loves us and considers us His treasure, His children. And so, we are to do what Colossians 3:14 urges us to do: "And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

If we do not love when we notice, pray for others, listen, and ask questions, we will fail. And so, we must strive to love as God has loved us. If we start with love, this leads to building trusting friendships that will allow us to share and engage in spiritual conversations.

What would this look like? Mary Schaller writes how it can start “as simply as noticing someone’s need, providing a listening ear, greeting someone warmly, taking the initiative to engage someone in a conversation about God, or inviting someone into your home for coffee.”

In 1 Corinthians 13, where it describes love... it’s action words. God didn’t just speak about love, He acted on it at great cost to Himself. Therefore, you also can’t just talk about love, there’s an action to it.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO LOVE SOMEONE IN CRISIS

1. Don’t speak, just listen: sometimes true compassion is expressed through presence, silence, and human companionship than speaking.
2. Use gentle, sensitive words: acknowledging another’s pain, gives them permission to grieve and allows them to move forward with healing. Don’t give unsolicited advice or offer platitudes, or minimize the problem, or claim to know how the other person feels.
3. Avoid theological pronouncements: a time will come when that will be appropriate and will bring comfort, but be sensitive to where the other person is at.
4. Show up: love shows up in support.
5. Look to Jesus: remind yourself and others of God’s sovereignty. Pray that the Holy Spirit helps you to know when to remind people of the truth.

PRACTICE: DEVELOPING HEALTHY SPIRITUAL RHYTHMS

1. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. *“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”*

Each time it says “love” substitute your name... so “Jee is patient and kind; etc.” Did the words that you read about yourself seem true to you? What would family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, classmates say about this passage with your name in it? These are hard questions, so don’t be discouraged. However, this gives us a starting point from which to proceed in our growth.

What would happen if you changed each phrase to: “I want to be patient... I want to be kind... etc?”

2. *Think through some simple ways that the love we’ve so generously received from God can be expressed to someone who is outside the family of God. Act on it and jot down what you learned about your capacity to love others.*