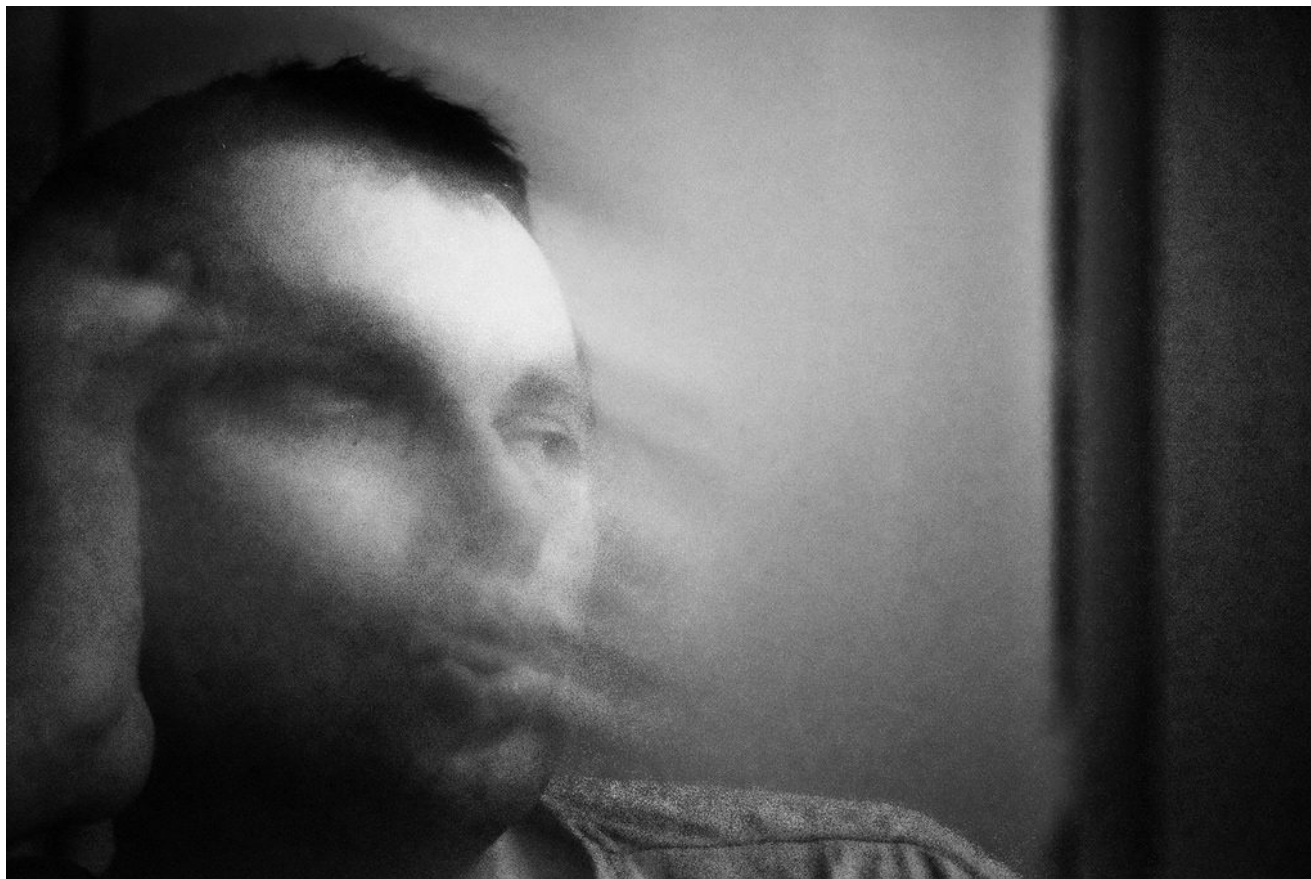


Skill Training: How Transparent Should I Be as a Group Leader?

[MH markhowelllive.com/skill-training-how-transparent-should-i-be-as-a-group-leader/](https://markhowelllive.com/skill-training-how-transparent-should-i-be-as-a-group-leader/)

June 1, 2015



Question: How transparent should you be as a small group leader? Should you share your struggles with the group? Or should you seek to be an example to your group?

These good questions, don't you think? They are part of the internal debate that every leader has.

In my post, 8 Habits of Life-Changing Small Group Leaders, I point out several interrelated habits that I believe must be cultivated by every small group leader.

First, small group leaders need to make time with God a daily priority.

A regular and ongoing conversation with God adds an essential ingredient to spiritual growth. Spending consistent time with God, reading His word and praying, are not elective activities. Jesus modeled this essential habit. "Very early in the morning, while it was still

dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.” Mark 1:35 NIV

Small group leaders need to make time with God a daily priority. A regular and ongoing conversation with God adds an essential ingredient to spiritual growth. [Click To Tweet](#)

Second, small group leaders need to follow the best example and offer a good example.

The Apostle Paul urged the members of the church in Corinth to “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1 NIV).” This is an important teaching. He's not asking them to do anything he's not doing. He's challenging them to follow his example (as he follows the example of Christ).

A little frightening, right? But is it too challenging for a small group leader? I love Paul's words to the ordinary church members at Ephesus: "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:1-3 NIV)."

Small group leaders need to follow the best example and offer a good example. The Apostle Paul urged the members of the church in Corinth to follow his example, as he followed the example of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). [Click To Tweet](#)

Third, small group leaders need to know they haven't arrived.

One key to this habit is developing an openness about your journey that allows you to share the fact that while you are becoming more like Jesus, you are not yet fully like Him. You still have struggles. You still stumble.

I love the Apostle Paul's words to the church at Philippi: “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3:12-14 NIV)."

Small group leaders need to know they haven't arrived. One key to this habit is developing an openness about your journey that allows you to share the fact that while you are becoming more like Jesus, you are not yet fully like Him.... [Click To Tweet](#)

Let's get practical: The question today is how transparent should I be as a small group leader?

Here are 5 guiding principles:

1. Trying to appear to have it all together isn't helpful.

If the Apostle Paul acknowledged that he was a work in progress, you can too.

2. Use discretion when determining what to share and with whom to share.

Some hurts, hangups or habits can be shared openly. Some specifics are better shared with an accountability partner or coach/mentor.

3. Model the depth of appropriate sharing.

As you are open about your own journey, your members will often begin to develop a comparable openness. See also, Life-Change at the Member Level Begins with You.

4. Practice sub-grouping for prayer and accountability.

Developing the practice of sub-grouping for prayer and accountability will help you and your members to learn to be transparent. See also, Skill Training: Sub-Grouping for a Deeper Connection.

5. Enlist an accountability partner.

Modeling this spiritual practice will help your group members to do the same. There are some hurts, hang-ups and habits that should be shared at this level. See also, The Power of a Spiritual Training Partner.

Image by Jone