



Part 2: True Connection // Jeff Brodie // January 14th, 2024

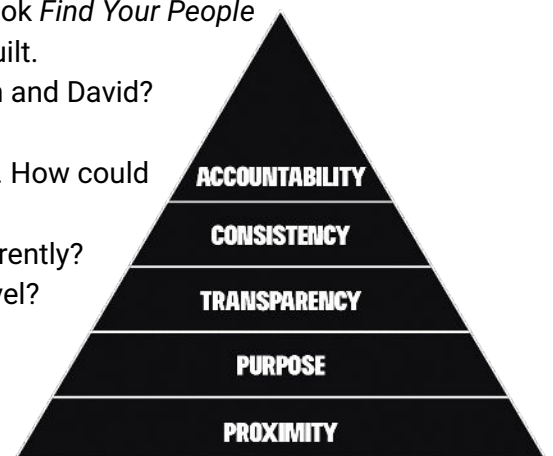
We are wired for relationships. For real friendship. It's one thing to understand that you need to have meaningful friendships in your life; it's another thing to build them. If you wanted to start a meaningful friendship, where do you begin? If you already have friends, how do you take those relationships to a deeper level of meaning? How do you build fulfilling friendships in your life?

Scripture: [1 Samuel 18:1-15 NLT](#); [1 Samuel 20 NLT](#)

Bottom Line: Meaningful relationships aren't something you fall into, they're something you have to fight for.

Discuss:

1. Did you attempt to have a meaningful conversation with someone last week? How did that go? What did you learn?
2. Arthur Brooks, author and Harvard professor teaching the science of happiness, emphasizes the importance of meaningful relationships. He points out how later in life, people realize that the majority of their friends are **deal** friends (friends by association—work, group, family, church, teams, etc.) vs. **real** friends (deep meaningful friendships that last and transcend association). Where have you seen this to be true in your own life? How many real friends would you say you have?
3. Read [1 Samuel 18:1-15](#) and [1 Samuel 20](#). When you look at Jonathan and David's friendship, you see something both tested and special. What surprises you about their friendship? What do you admire about their friendship? What lessons can you learn?
4. Jeff shared the following tool based on Jennie Allen's book *Find Your People* to help us understand how meaningful friendships are built.
 - a. Where do you see these levels between Jonathan and David?
 - b. Where do you see these in your friendships?
 - c. Describe a friendship that is at one level and why. How could you move it to the next level?
 - d. Where would you say you are with your group currently? What would it take for you to move to the next level?



5. Which of these relational levels resonates with you most, and which do you find the most challenging? How so? Explore how each level and its corresponding enemy go together.
 - a. **Proximity** is the beginning of friendship. **Busyness** is the enemy of proximity.
 - b. **Purpose** is the direction of the relationship. **Shallowness** is the enemy of purpose.
 - c. **Transparency** is the trust in a relationship. **Shame/pain** are the enemy of transparency.
 - d. **Consistency** creates resilience in the relationship. **Unresolved conflict** is the enemy of consistency.
 - e. **Accountability** creates depth in the relationship. **Pride** is the enemy of accountability.
6. Jeff urged us to choose two key friendships, identify which level they are at currently, and then strive to move them to the next level over the three remaining weeks of the series. What about this both excites you and makes you nervous? How could your group help encourage you and hold you accountable?

Moving Forward:

This week, read [Proverbs 18:24](#) and [John 15:12-15](#). What do these passages reveal about the kind of friend that Jesus is toward us? What does this mean to you? How can you pursue this same heart in your friendships with others?