

Way of Discipleship Small Groups

Leading: The character of a leader - humility



Touching base (5 minutes)

Open in prayer as is helpful for your group.

If this is your first session take time to introduce yourselves and set any ground rules you want to for your time together.

If you met previously take the opportunity either as a group or in pairs to check in with each other about how your response from last time has gone.



Opening question(s) (5 minutes)

Why does the character of a leader matter?



Understanding the information and optional Johari exercise (20 or 45 minutes)

Share these thoughts in your own words or read them together:

In being able to influence others, there are of course skills and processes we can learn that are important. But while contexts, situations and perspectives can vary, one factor remains constant - it is the character of the leader that determines how far people will be willing to follow. Christlike character is the determining factor in our ability to inspire, enable and mobilise others. Character is “who you are when no one is looking”. “It seems hard for us to believe, but God is not impressed with talent nearly as much as He is with character.” One writer goes to far as to say, “The shape of your character is the shape of your future.” It is the character of a servant-leader that will make the biggest difference.



Humility. Jesus consistently warned his disciples against seeking status, titles, recognition or significance based on others’ opinions: Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 10: 25-28) His final “acted parable” was that of taking the position of the humblest slave in washing his disciples’ feet. (It’s helpful to note that a qualification for leadership is also allowing your own feet to be washed, as well as serving others).

In church processions, the bishop always enters last. This is not meant to symbolically emphasise the importance of the role, but the deep humility of episcopacy, in coming last. Only when they say it is, “A poor sinner, your brother” can the funeral procession be allowed to enter.

Humility is not about having low self-image or poor self-esteem. It is about self-awareness, having a proper sense of our status before God. While profoundly unconcerned about their own reputation or advancement, these leaders are concerned about the flourishing of the organisation not simply for the period of their own tenure but also beyond. They have the capacity to look out of the window to give credit to factors outside themselves when things go well, and they look in the mirror to take responsibility, not blaming “luck” or circumstance, when things go poorly.

Humility means we can pursue the true hallmark of biblical leadership (and the real evidence of our fruitfulness) – the enabling of others. We will be giving ourselves away, knowing it is not “about us”. Just as Jesus consistently called others, and disseminated His work through them, so we will be catalysts of others, seeing the true fruit of leadership not in what we achieve, but in what grows after we move on.

It will also mean we are able to keep growing – to receive feedback and criticism, particularly about those parts of ourselves of which we are unaware, without feeling threatened, and thus keep developing.

Discuss: How does humility grow?

Optional: Use the Johari Window exercise on the handout to invite feedback about each other.

Reading the Bible (15 minutes)

Read Philippians 2: 1-11 which describes the nature of Jesus’ humility.

Discuss the Discovery Bible Study questions:

What does this passage teach me about God?

What does this passage teach me about people?

How does this passage call me to obey God?

What might I do in response to this this week?

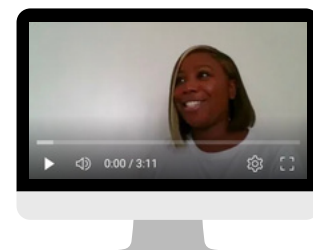


Seeing how it looks in real lives (10 minutes)

Watch the video at:

<https://youtu.be/xOCRVv20ix4>

What struck you as important in the video?



Responding to God’s leading (5 minutes)

Give people an opportunity to think about, “What might God be showing me and how might I respond?” They may like to write this down and/or share it with the group and/or share it with one other person. A friendly question is to ask each other, “Is there anything that would be helpful to ask you next time?”



Group prayer (5 minutes)

God,
I am far too often influenced by what others think of me.
I am always pretending to be either richer
or smarter or nicer than I really am.
Please prevent me from trying to attract attention.
Don't let me gloat over praise on one hand
or be discouraged by criticism on the other.
Nor let me waste time
weaving imaginary situations in which
the most heroic, charming, witty person present
is myself.
Show me how to be humble of heart,
like you.
Amen



From jesuitresource



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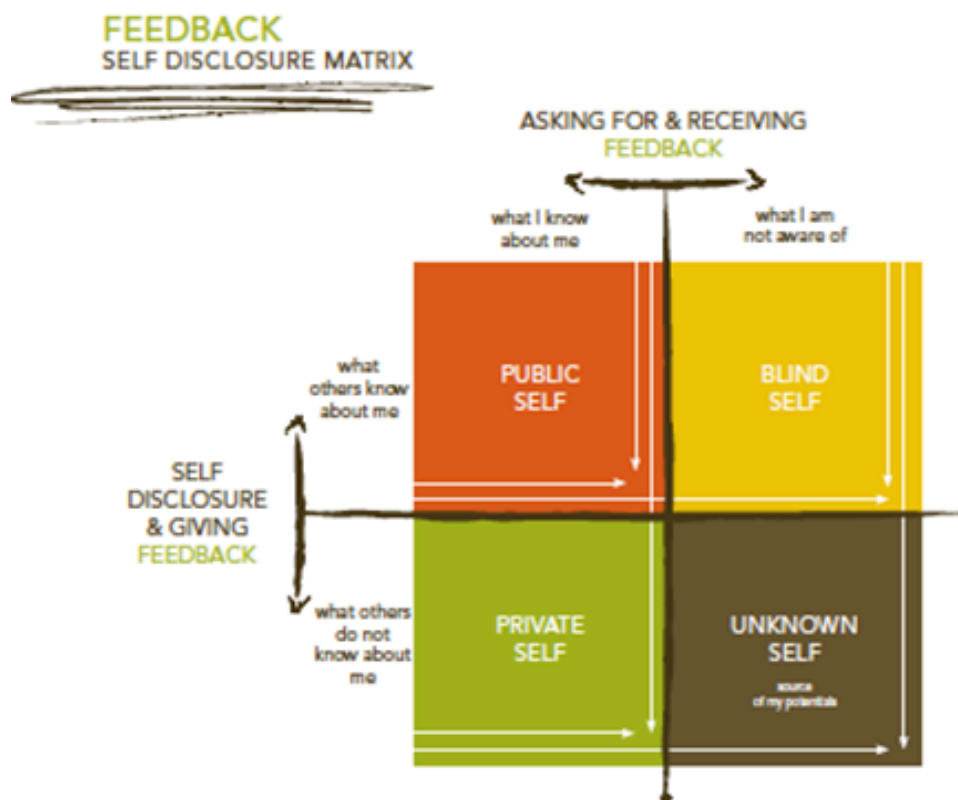
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DEVELOPING MY CHARACTER THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK: THE JOHARI WINDOW

A Johari window is a psychological tool created by Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955. It's a simple and useful tool for growing in self-awareness.



THERE ARE TWO FACTORS AT WORK WITHIN THE JOHARI WINDOW.

The first factor is what you know about yourself. The second factor relates to what other people know about you.

The model works using four area quadrants.

Anything you know about yourself and are willing to share is part of your open area – public self. Individuals can build trust between themselves by disclosing information to others and learning about others from the information they in turn disclose about themselves.

Any aspect that you do not know about yourself, but others within the group have become aware of, is in your blind self. With the help of feedback from others you can become aware of some of your positive and negative traits as perceived by others.

There are also aspects about yourself that you are aware of but might not want others to know. This quadrant is known as your private self.

This leaves just one area and is the area that is unknown to you or anyone else – the unknown self.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN THE FOUR QUADRANTS CAN CHANGE.

You might want to tell someone an aspect of your life that you had previously kept hidden. For example, maybe you are not comfortable contributing ideas in large groups. This would increase your open area and decrease your hidden area.

It is also possible to increase your open area by asking for feedback from people. When feedback is given honestly to you it can reduce the size of your blind area.

Maybe you interrupt people before they have finished making their point which can cause frustration. Alternatively people may always want to talk to you because you are a good listener. Sometimes you don't realise these aspects of your character until it is pointed out.

By working with others it is possible for you to discover aspects that neither of you may never have appreciated before. Some examples of unknown factors can be as follows:

- an ability that is underestimated or untried through lack of opportunity, encouragement, confidence or training
- a natural ability or aptitude that a person doesn't realise they possess
- a fear or aversion that a person does not know they have
- an unknown illness
- repressed or subconscious feeling
- conditioned behaviour or attitudes from childhood

From a practical point of view in using the Johari window you need to look at two steps.

Step one: The place to start in the Johari window is in the open area. Make some notes about yourself. What are your strengths and your weaknesses? What are you comfortable with and willing to share with others? Try and be honest and clear about what you know about yourself already.

Step two: Involve other people and ask for feedback about yourself. Be prepared to seriously consider it. That doesn't mean that you have to do everything that's suggested, but you should at least listen and think about it. Then give the person who provided the feedback some acknowledgement or thanks for making the effort. Depending on how confident you are you might prefer to do this as either a group exercise or on a one to one basis. Remember that giving effective feedback is a skill and some people may be better at it than others. When receiving feedback, be respectful, listen and reflect on what has been said. It may be on receiving feedback you may want to explore it further that can lead to discovery about yourself.

Harry Potter

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Orphan * Aunt, Uncle, and cousin don't like him * Parents died in car accident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Wizard * The Boy Who Lived * He Who Must Not be Named killed his parents and tried to kill him * Mother was muggle-born witch * Father a wizard and Seeker * His father bullied Snape
Not Known to Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Mistreated * Lives under the stairs * The snake talked to him * The glass wall disappeared * Family ignores his birthday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Excellent on a broom stick * His scar connects him to Voldemort * He will choose a wand that's twin was Voldemort's * He's very brave and courageous

The Johari window as a tool does have its drawbacks:

Some things are perhaps better not communicated with others. People may pass on the information they received further than you desire. Some people or cultures have a very open and accepting approach to feedback and some do not. People can take personal feedback offensively so it's important when facilitating to exercise caution and start gradually.

Just as an example, opposite is one from a wizard: