STAR Series

For Congregational Leaders

AUTHENTICITY

COMPETENCY: Authentic leadership has a transformational impact. Magnetic authentic leadership, supporting young adults to share their true selves, mastering "click" moments, Palmer's true self principles, and the likability factor—are all crucial for creating genuine connections with young adults.

Click Factor: Authentic Leaders Transforming Young Adult Ministry

1 AUTHENTICITY CREATES MAGNETIC LEADERSHIP

When you show up authentically, you attract the right people, build genuine trust, feel more fulfilled, inspire others, and make better decisions aligned with your values. Young adults have finely-tuned authenticity detectors—they can sense when someone is genuine versus performing. As author Donald Miller says, "When you confuse, you lose." Your people are trying to find you, so when you show up as anyone other than yourself, you confuse them. Give yourself permission to be whatever your authentic self looks like.

2 UNDERSTAND THE DEVELOPING BRAIN

While young adults deeply desire to be accepted for who they are, they still face pressures to conform in their peer groups, workplaces, and even congregations. They're caught between their true self (who they were uniquely created to be) and their false self (formed from external expectations and the desire to please). As leaders, creating safe spaces for young adults to explore their authentic identity helps them let go of the false self.

3 MASTER THE "CLICK" MOMENTS

A "click" moment happens when you achieve near-perfect alignment between what you think and feel and how you deliver that through action. Kids are naturals at this—they haven't learned to mask feelings or hide actions yet. Examples include standing up for someone when stakes are high, owning and speaking strong emotions truthfully, saying no when tired, or sharing something vulnerable. When building young adult programs, click into your own authenticity so your twenty-somethings can model you and grow in their own authenticity.

4 APPLY PARKER PALMER'S TRUE SELF PRINCIPLES

Access your authentic self through three practices: Listen deeply by asking "What is life trying to say through me?" rather than "What should I do?" Embrace your limits—your true self includes weaknesses and fears, not just strengths. Build a circle of trust with friendships that invite authenticity rather than trying to fix you. Model this by loving instead of judging and listening instead of advising.



5 LEVERAGE THE LIKABILITY FACTOR

Research by body language expert Vanessa VanEdwards reveals that the most popular people aren't the smartest or most attractive—they simply have the longest list of people they LIKE. Liking people makes you more likable because you make others feel connected. Combine authentic "clicking" with genuinely liking people, and you'll build incredible relationships with young adults that draw them closer to your congregational community.

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ROADMAP

Curriculum Domain, Competency and Task Constellations

STAR Domain:	Listening
Associated Competency:	Relationship building and Compassion
Associated Task:	Equanimity

STAR Domain:	Young Adult Leadership
Associated Competency:	Resourcefulness and Communication
Associated Task:	Recruiting

STAR Domain:	Faith Journey
Associated Competency:	Creating Trust
Associated Task:	Spiritual formation

STAR Domain:	Culture
Associated Competency:	Adaptability
Associated Task:	Embracing failure

STAR Domain:	Intergenerational Connections
Associated Competency:	Mentorship
Associated Task:	Generational literacy and Digital literacy

STAR Domain:	Community
Associated Competency:	**Authenticity** and Inclusivity
Associated Task:	Managing conflict

STAR Domain:	Church Leadership
Associated Competency:	Influence and Purpose
Associated Task:	Creating buy-in

STAR Domain:	Frameworks, Programs, & Events
Associated Competency:	Learning
Associated Task:	Sticky programs and Measure and assess