

FIND YOUR PEOPLE: BUILDING DEEP COMMUNITY IN A LONELY WORLD
by Jennie Allen, 2022.

PART 1 – We need each other.

CH 1 – There is Another Way

People make up the best and the most painful parts of life.

Acquaintance / Village / Close Friends pyramid of 150/50/15/5 (8)

Time spent together is the biggest determinant of close friends.

The village vs our actual way of life, we insulate & isolate & withdraw.

Ch 2 – The Connection We Crave

If God at center of relational circle, we are fulfilled and can reach out.

If people at the center, we pull on others to meet needs they cannot possibly meet. (25)

Mission statement: We are called to be a community, on a mission, reconciling the world, bringing people in (28)

We are fighting against the US cultural value of independence.

Village life does not happen by accident. We have to build a new life. (33)

Ch 3 – A Vision for Something More

We wait for the perfect friend, we want them to be everything for us.

What if the power of a team of friends is that each one brings something different? If you expect one person to fulfill all these roles, no one will succeed. We need variety. (39)

Back to The Fall and how independence ruined the relationship...

Ch 4 – Find Your People

It's ok to be selective about your friends.

Community does not come naturally. We have to look for it, cultivate it, and fight to protect it once we have it. (53)

You will always be doing community with sinners. (53)

Who is your inner circle? (concentric circle diagram)

Look for: Availability. Humility. Transparency. (55-57)

Choose friends who are committed to fighting against the dark as you are. Pray for this. And pray to become this. We cannot have what we are not willing to become. (57)

Overview of the Journey: (60)

Proximity, Transparency, Accountability, Shared Purpose, Consistency.

PART 2 – The Path to Connection

Ch 5 – Close

Goal – Proximity. Barrier – Busyness.

Real life, face to face, no phones, together.

Target – 5 friends within 5 miles.

We go through life barely engaging with the people God has put in front of us.

We tend to be too busy and fail to invite people into our lives.

We tend to center everything on our nuclear family and not dream of non-blood friends.

We move constantly and never truly commit to a place.

Relationships should arise out of your everyday places and your everyday activities.

Proximity is a starting place for intimacy. (73)

Challenge – Venn diagram your life, circles of activities and locations. Name 3-4 people in each that you could go deeper with. Think of them as potential friendships. (74)

Who do you enjoy? Who do you have things in common with/ Who seems interested in you?

You have to go first, put yourself out there! (76) You will not find friends if you don't initiate.

Types of people you need – The Sage, The Encourager, The Foxhole, The Challenger, The Fun one, The Planner.

Start good conversations. List of other ideas (87)

Ch 6 – Safe

Goal – Transparency, Barrier – Pain/Shame

“I cannot be in a relationship where I am the only one being authentic.”

We hide because of pain. And because we have been burned.

Vulnerability is the soil for intimacy, and what waters intimacy is tears. (96)

We hide because of shame. The cost of shame is connection.

Remember, your whole village does not need to know everything. Only those committed to walking with you qualify here.

Can we have a deeper talk? Share. Listen. Don't solve. Affirm. Follow up.

You will only be as close to your friend as you are vulnerable with her. (107)

Complaining is centered on others and seeks relief. Vulnerability requires humility and a willingness to grow, vulnerability seeks transformation and connection. (113)

List of ideas. (111)

Ch 7 – Protected

Goal – Accountability, Barrier – Pride.

We tend to resent being called out on our behavior.

Benefits of accountability – more effective, live better, challenges us.

Accountability is not just sin avoidance; it's challenging and inspiring each other.

Who has wisdom to speak into your life?

Don't take criticism from just anyone, choose the voices carefully. (126)

If I'm careening off a cliff and you're cheering for me, that's not good. When I am being a fool, I need help. (127)

Nothing is more freeing than owning your mistakes.

Stop pretending you have it all together. (131)

Questions for pursuing accountability. (136)

Ideas about how to ask people for advice. (137)

Ch 8 – Deep

Goal – Shared Purpose, Barrier – Shallow/Small talk

We live disconnected – work life, home life, social life do not overlap like a village would.

We mistakenly think friendship is about us. As Christians, we have a built in KOG mission regardless of our job, neighborhood, hobby, or school.

Go do something, together!

Change your perspective – what if the places where you live, work, and play became mission fields and the people became your teammates? (151)

Friends do not fall from the sky. Friends are always made. (153)

True discipleship is not something you do once a week. It's what you do every day. (154)

Exercise – 168 hours/week. Where do you spend your time? (156)

What do you need to add or subtract?

Are you investing in things that result in relationships?

If you are truly busy, there should be opportunities to connect with people.

Ch 9 – Committed

Goal – Consistency, Barrier – Conflict

Conflict is inevitable. But if handled well, can strengthen and deepen friendships. (164)

Always assume the best, keep short accounts, be quick to apologize, be a peacemaker.

I take responsibility for hurting them, even if I did not mean to. (172)

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Romans 12:18

How many hours have you logged with your friends? (176)

Ideas how to get consistent time together. (178)

PART 3 – Fighting For Your Village

Ch 10 – Finding Your Family

“Fictive Kinship” is strong social ties that are not by marriage or blood. (194)

The example of Ruth, who chose to stay and take Naomi as family. (200)

Will you chose to stay – in imperfect relationships? To fight for the good?

You will find in the world exactly what you expect to find. Look for the beauty. (201)

Ch 11 – Holding On to Your People

The enemy's tactics to subvert good relationships through:

-Codependency. When we look to one person to be everything we need.

-Independence. Never do anything alone. Ask for help.

-Busyness. Bring people along in your busy day.

-Gossip. Refuse to participate. Shut it down.

-Comparison. Chose to celebrate with others. Why are you competing?

-Laziness. You must start initiating.

-Fear.

“Any relationship that drains you faster than it pours into you is not a friendship, it's a ministry opportunity.” (214)

Be guarded about who you bring into your closest circle.

Do these things: Ask questions. Listen. Be transparent. Say you love and need them. Do fun things together. (216)

Stop these: Waiting for others to ask. Being offended. Having lots of opinions. Talking badly. Keeping a record of wrongs. (217)

Let mistakes go, everyone messes up occasionally. React to unhealthy patterns, not one-time mistakes. (218)

Ch 12 – Intimacy of the Few

We do not need fifty people who know our hard, but we do need a few who are in it with us. (223)

Hard times are always here, but so are the beautiful times.