

Cold calling

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Some members in the Bromley community are going to be making some cold calls this week, myself included. For me, that's quite a daunting prospect. I find it uncomfortable to speak on the phone with people I know quite well, let alone people I barely know. So why am I, and hopefully many others, pushing ourselves to do this task?

Last Sunday the Bromley Unification Community was privileged to welcome Mrs. Nancy Jubb to deliver the message during our Sunday morning worship service. Talking about "The Legacy of Love", Nancy shared about her pride in inheriting a legacy of love from True Parents, a legacy which is most characterised (at least in the public media) by the marriage blessing. We need to cultivate intimacy, especially in our marriages, but Nancy encourages us to build intimacy in all of our relationships, with children, with other human beings, even with God. Simply by developing our ability to communicate, we can develop greater relationship skills.

And so Nancy concluded her message with a call to action: She invited everyone to pause for a moment to think of someone whom they rarely speak with. With our chosen persons having been selected, she then challenged us to find some time this week to pick up the phone and call that person simply to have a conversation with them. No agenda. No ulterior motivation. No business. Just ask them how they are doing and have a chat.

I don't know about the majority of the members of the congregation, but while this challenge is helpful in that it is measurable, tangible, even practical, I will find it very hard to do. I'm not a very talkative person, and I'm increasingly awkward when speaking on the phone. I reflected on how I might go about responding to this challenge. And so I've decided on a few key tips to help myself accomplish this week's mission.

By sharing these tips with you, I hope to also inspire you, just in case you're also wondering how to respond to this homework.

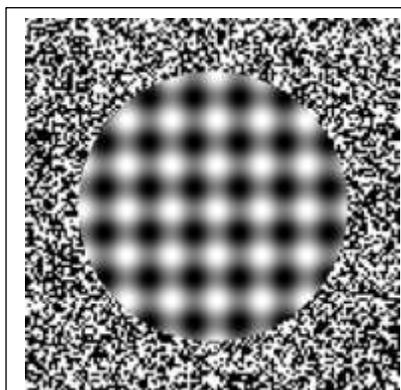
Tip #1: Pray with God



Even before I begin to make a plan to make a phone call, I want my heart to be ready. By praying, I want to see the person I've chosen from God's perspective, to cultivate the quality of heart that recognises this person as a son/daughter of God, deserving of God's true love, and in need of intimacy with another human being. On the way to meet Kim Il-Sung in 1991 in Pyong Yang, True Father stopped over in Hawaii to pray intensely beforehand. I believe that this time was spent

preparing his heart to be in tune with God's frequency, so that when he met the man who had tried to kill him, he would have not a shred of bitterness or resentment in his heart, only love. While the person I plan to call is not someone I would consider an enemy, that intensity of prayer could lay the foundation for a fruitful relationship to grow.

Tip #2: Prioritise Uninterrupted Time



Aim to remain focused

It's annoying when somebody makes the effort to ask you how you're doing but doesn't actually have the time to really listen attentively to your answer. (Which is why I rarely ask "How are you doing?" as a greeting.) I can't squeeze this phone call into a short time slot that has opened up, just to get it out of the way. I need to give myself at least half an hour, so that I can afford to spend that time in conversation and not worry about anything else. I'll make sure it's at a time or location where I won't be interrupted by young children or by my wife calling me to a meal. I will find a reasonably quiet space, not in a noisy high street or where there are strong winds blowing, but perhaps in a room on my own. I'll focus my attention by turning off all electronic distractions (e.g. laptop, tablet device, mobile device if I'm using a land-line to make the

call). In the Way of God's Will, True Father instructed those members who were witnessing to 'listen to him thoroughly and be concerned with all his problems. Only after that should you talk to him about your situation.' By preparing the time and environment to allow myself to be completely focused on the person I'm calling, I will be liberated to listen actively, and respond appropriately. It might also be worthwhile considering when would be the best time for the person I'm calling to receive the call so that they can be available to answer and have enough time to chat.

Tip #3: Prepare Some Questions



This is a tricky one, because the instructions were to make a call with no prior agenda. Nevertheless, it's possible that the conversation may stall if there's nothing interesting to talk about. The person I call might not be very talkative. Or perhaps they're not comfortable on the phone. Or, because we don't normally talk with each other, they might not know have a clue what to discuss with me. I wouldn't expect a near-stranger to begin sharing private details from deep within their heart if I've rarely spoken to them

before, and I certainly wouldn't expect them to during this phone call. But to help initiate the conversation, lubricating the give-and-take, I could imagine the topics they might be interested in: A question about a recent sporting event? A reflection on a recent news item? A sensitive enquiry into the well-being of their family members? A query into their studies/career/hobbies? By having a few ideas in back-up, I can ensure that that cold call will not be too frosty.

Although it would be great to have an unexpectedly lengthy conversation, discovering that the person I call and I could be really good friends, I will be satisfied even with just a short chat; perhaps it could lead to a lengthier discussion the next time we meet. I'm not expecting to transform someone's day by calling them, but sharing a little bit of love can't do any harm.

I hope these tips are helpful. Please submit your own suggestions as a comment to this post. But just to briefly summarise my suggestions:

#1. Pray

#2. Prioritise

#3. Prepare