



Relational Needs

FACILITATORS' GUIDE

Copyright© 2007 by Relationship Press. Updated 2022. All rights reserved. No portion of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means-electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or any other-except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

Relationship Press • 2511 S. Lakeline Blvd • Cedar Park, TX 78613
Phone: 1-800-881-8008 • www.relationshippress.com

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version (NIV). Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved. Other Scripture references are from The New American Standard Bible (NASB), © 1960, 1977, 1995 by the Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

Table of Contents

Welcome to the Top Ten Relational Needs Facilitator's Guide	1
<i>Session 1:</i>	
Needs: An Important Aspect of How God Made Us	2
<i>Session 2:</i>	
The Top Ten Relational Needs	7
<i>Session 3:</i>	
Three Hindrances to Needs Being Met	11
<i>Session 4:</i>	
Which Needs Are Most Important?	15
<i>Session 5:</i>	
How Needs Impact Thoughts, Feelings, and Behavior	19
<i>Session 6:</i>	
Giving to Meet the Needs of Others	23
<i>Session 7:</i>	
Difficult Issues: When People Seem Too Needy; When You Feel Burned Out	27
<i>Session 8:</i>	
Dealing with Unmet Needs	32

Welcome to the *Top Ten Relational Needs Facilitator's Guide*

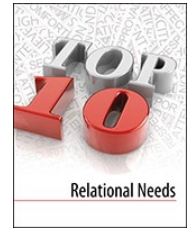
Top Ten Relational Needs is a course of study designed to help participants explore the nature of the key relational needs that all humans share. It is our hope that this resource will help participants to gain greater insight into the ways that God meets their relational needs, as well as equipping them to better recognize and meet the needs of others.

This *Facilitator's Guide* is intended to give leaders everything they need to effectively help others experience this course. It consists of eight sessions corresponding to the eight chapters of the *Top Ten Relational Needs* text, each of which includes the following features:

- A Session Overview which includes the Key Concepts for the session, a list of Central Scripture Passages, and numbered Learning Objectives for the session.
- A Facilitator Preparation section which offers guidelines for working your way through the material in each chapter (including the experiential exercises) and preparing to lead the session.
- A Session Plan with resources for each part of the session—discussion questions with which to open, suggested remarks for transitioning to the main content of the session, notes on how to present the content associated with each Learning Objective, instructions for guiding participants through the experiential exercises (*Gratitude for His Love* and *Living It Out*) and the Small Group Notes contained in each chapter, and suggestions for closing the session. Suggested time frames for each segment of the session are also included, with an entire session being designed to last ninety minutes. (If you have less time for your sessions, you will need to adjust the teaching outline accordingly.)

May you be blessed and transformed by this course as you pursue a deeper understanding of our human neediness and God's abundant provision.

SESSION 1



Needs: An Important Aspect of How God Made Us

SESSION OVERVIEW

Key Concepts

- All people—regardless of age, gender, race, religion, language, or socio-economic status—share certain basic physical, spiritual, and relational needs.
- Neediness is not a defect, but an integral part of our God-given human identity.
- We cannot meet our own needs. Our needs can only be addressed in the context of loving relationships with God and other people.
- Our neediness promotes dependence upon God, interdependence with one another, and compassion for others who are in need.

Central Scripture Passages

- Philippians 4:19
- 1 Corinthians 12:12–26

Learning Objectives

- 1) Participants will examine five key characteristics of all needs.
- 2) Participants will explore five reasons why God created us with needs.

FACILITATOR PREPARATION

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (Colossians 3:16).

- 1) Work your way through all of the material in Chapter 1 of the *Top Ten Relational Needs* text, allowing the Key Concepts and biblical truths to first "dwell in you" before considering how you wish to share them with others.
 - Read the chapter carefully, making notes and giving thorough consideration to the concepts presented.
 - Read and meditate upon the Central Scripture Passages, reflecting on how they give further illumination to the material contained in the chapter.
 - Complete the Personal Assessment questions, praying that God would grant you insight and help you to answer honestly.
 - Read and prayerfully respond to the *Gratitude for His Love* meditation, allowing God to impress your heart with the reality of His loving care for your needs.
- 2) If at all possible, share your experience of the chapter material with another person (spouse, family member, close friend) before you lead participants through the session.
 - Share any particularly meaningful insights that you gained from the chapter content or Scripture passages.
 - Complete the *Living It Out* exercise together, vulnerably sharing your responses to the Personal Assessment questions and praying for one another.
 - Work through the *Small Group Notes* together, reading the Bible passage, answering the discussion questions, and praying for one another.
- 3) Work your way carefully through the following Session Plan, modifying it as necessary to fit your own personality, group dynamics, and time constraints.
 - Prepare any additional materials you wish to use to supplement the chapter content.
 - Review the opening discussion questions and prepare your own answers in order to help facilitate the discussion.
 - Plan to vulnerably share your own insights and reactions to the chapter material, including your responses to the Personal Assessment questions and the *Living It Out* exercise.

SESSION PLAN

Starting the Session (15 minutes)

After welcoming participants and offering an opening prayer for God's direction and blessing, begin the session with the following discussion questions:

- Which of the following modern conveniences would you be most reluctant to live without-computers/internet, cell phones, or CD/MP3 players? (Note: If necessary, feel free to substitute other items that are more relevant to your cultural context.)
- None of the items listed above existed before the last few decades of the twentieth century. What kinds of things might earlier generations have considered equally indispensable? (Possible examples include television, radio, automobiles, electricity, and indoor plumbing.)
- What kinds of things might people in less technologically advanced cultural settings consider essential to their everyday lives? (Possible examples include tools, work animals, and wood for fuel.)
- As we can see, humanity's perceptions of what we "cannot live without" change greatly over time and vary tremendously from one culture to another. But what things are truly necessary to sustain human life, regardless of historical or cultural context? (If necessary, supplement their answers with some of the universal physical, spiritual, and relational needs listed in Chapter 1 of the *Top Ten Relational Needs* text.)

As a means of introducing the first Learning Objective, say something like the following:

"As humans, we share certain basic needs. Most obviously, we have *physical* needs, such as our needs for food, water, sleep, and oxygen. But we also have *spiritual* needs, such as our needs to experience God's love, forgiveness, and peace. Finally, we have *relational* needs, such as our needs for acceptance, appreciation, comfort, encouragement, and support. All of these essential human needs share five key characteristics. Let us examine those now."

Learning Objective #1: Participants will examine five key characteristics of all needs (25 minutes).

Begin this part of the session by briefly highlighting the first two characteristics of needs outlined in Chapter 1: **Needs are cross-cultural**, and **Needs exist in all generations**. Building off your earlier discussion questions, challenge participants to consider how each of these two criteria serves to help us distinguish between what we genuinely *need* and what we merely *want*.

Next, examine the third characteristic of all needs: **Needs are lifelong and continuous.** Highlight the fact that, while we all recognize that our physical needs remain constant throughout our lives, many adults attempt to conceal or deny that they still have the same spiritual and relational needs that they had as children. Discuss why this might be the case and invite participants to share any personal experiences or insights related to this tendency.

Proceed to explore the fourth characteristic of our needs: **It is OK to have needs; neediness is not a defect.** Emphasize the important truth that, if God has created us all with the same basic physical, spiritual, and relational needs, then it must be alright for us to have these needs and to admit that we have them. Discuss the harmful fallacy that neediness is synonymous with weakness or immaturity and invite participants to share their reflections concerning the reasons why so many people adopt such a viewpoint.

Next, move on to the fifth and final characteristic of all needs: **We cannot meet our own needs; needs can only be met in the context of meaningful relationships with God and others.** This important truth stands at the very center of this entire course of study, so be sure to discuss it thoroughly. In particular, you may wish to ask participants to suggest some things other than loving relationships with which people often attempt to satisfy their needs. Then explore the reasons why such approaches ultimately fail to bring fulfillment.

Finally, allow a few participants to share with the group which of the five characteristics of our needs they find most meaningful. Then, as a means of transitioning to the second Learning Objective, say something like the following:

"By now, we should be able to recognize three important truths: 1) Everyone who has ever lived or will ever live shares certain basic physical, spiritual, and relational needs, 2) God created us with these needs, so it is alright for us to have them, and 3) The only way in which our needs can be effectively met is in the context of meaningful relationships with God and other people. But even if we can accept each of these challenging statements, an important question remains: **Why** did God create us with these needs? Let us explore some of the answers to this question together."

Learning Objective #2: Participants will explore five reasons why God created us with needs (25 minutes).

Begin this portion of the session by emphasizing that our neediness does not reflect a mistake on God's part, but that He made a sovereign decision to create us with certain needs. Then proceed to examine each of the five reasons for our neediness that are given in the text: 1) Neediness encourages us to depend upon God, 2) Neediness promotes interdependence with one another, 3) Neediness fosters compassion for others in need, 4) Neediness frees us to both give and receive care, and 5) Neediness and mutual need-meeting produce unity in the body of Christ.

As you lead participants through this section of the chapter content, be sure to emphasize the important biblical passages that shed light on these reasons for our neediness. Give particular attention to 1 Corinthians 12:12–26, which deals with our relationships to one another as interdependent parts of the body of Christ. Finish this portion of the session by allowing a few participants to share which of the five reasons for our neediness they find most compelling.

Experiential Exercises/Small Group Interaction (20 minutes)

Before beginning this part of the session, allow participants to quickly complete the seven Personal Assessment questions in the textbook.

Lead participants through the *Gratitude for His Love* meditation at the end of Chapter 1, opening their eyes and hearts to the reality of a God who knows all of their needs and cares deeply for them. Invite them to respond to God with personal prayers of gratitude.

Next, instruct participants to split up into pairs or small groups and complete the *Living It Out* exercise for Chapter 1 together, examining their responses to the Personal Assessment questions and praying that God would deal with any attitudes that are hindering them from admitting their own needs or seeking to meet the needs of others.

If time permits, instruct participants to remain in their small groups and discuss the questions contained in the *Small Group Notes* for Chapter 1. Encourage them to pray together using the prayer pointers found at the end of the *Small Group Notes*.

Closing the Session (5 minutes)

Remind participants of the time of your next meeting. Direct their attention to Chapter 2 of the *Top Ten Relational Needs* text, encouraging them to read the chapter, to complete the exercises found in the Appendix, to meditate on the experiential exercises. Conclude the session by praying together as a large group.