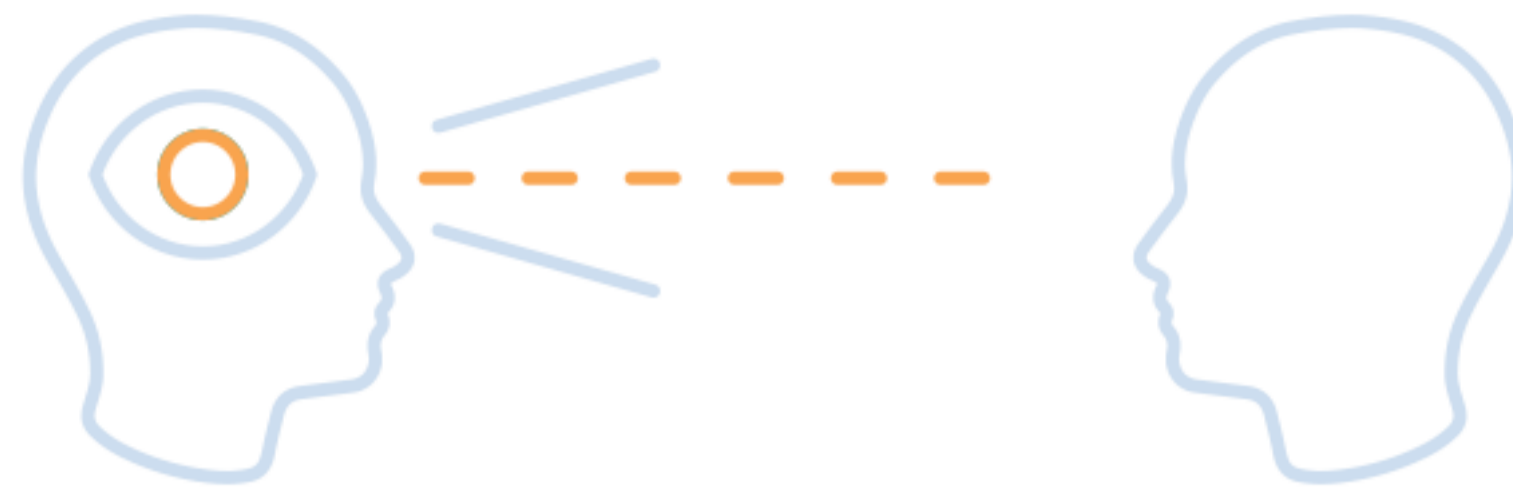


THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 1: (I am) Noticed

“The perception of ‘being noticed’ by another—being seen or acknowledged, even in the most straightforward ways—is the initial step toward a sense of belonging. It is here that young people describe the power of being invited into the relationship and having others become interested in them. The simple act of seeing generates an initial sense of belongingness for a young person, which creates a foundation for deeper relationships.”

Read more in the free white paper, *A Springtide™ Guide for Serving the Young People in Your Life*, to begin the *Belongingness Challenge*.

[Download](#)

Serve the young people in your life with *Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation*.

[Learn more](#)



This week's Tide Turning To-do:

Give a young person the experience of being noticed.

It's time to reflect on who is showing up in your sphere.

Download the free Tide Turning spreadsheet and begin to populate it with what you know about the young people in your life—organization, group, classroom, etc. Start with an initial fill-in, then wait a few days and see if you can fill in a bit more. Who haven't you seen in awhile? Who is on the outskirts?

[Get the free spreadsheet](#)

Your Belongingness Challenge Toolkit

[Get the free white paper: A Springtide™ Guide for Serving the Young People in Your Life](#)

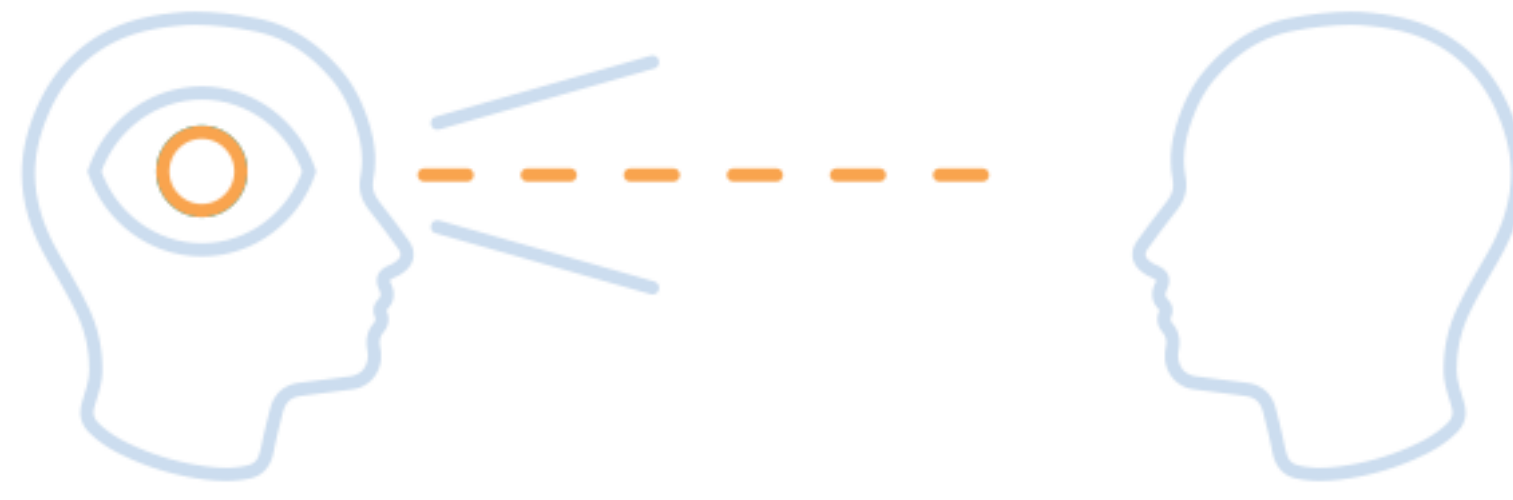
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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 1: (I am) Noticed

Being noticed can also mean being a place of welcome. How are you welcoming those who are on the periphery?

"Making someone know they are invited as a full participant, they are safe, and there is space for them within the organization is often a matter of simple, straightforward gestures of welcome: warm greetings, intentional connections, clear orientation, and so on. Despite the simplicity of some of these actions, they are powerful—and not just for young people. A culture of welcome can impact an entire organization, encouraging members to be the *welcomers* and not just the *welcomed*."

Creating a culture of welcome is essential to attracting and retaining young people. Read this selection from our report, [Meaning Making: 8 Values That Drive America's Newest Generations](#).

[Read more](#)

[Find the report on Amazon](#)



This week's Tide Turning To-do: Creating a space of welcome for those on the outskirts

Imagine creating a "Welcoming Kit" for your organization. What would you include to help a new person understand your history or identity? How would that person's schedule help them get to know individuals and the whole group?

Consider implementing a real welcome strategy, if you don't already have one, for both new members and those who may be on the periphery of joining. How might you welcome them in different ways?

Create a welcoming strategy. Who in your sphere can help you do this?

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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 2: (I am) Named

“Commit to knowing the names of the young people in your community. When you learn a young person’s name, confirm that you are using their expressed pronouns and proper pronunciation.

“Memorize their name and use it three times in conversation soon after learning it, and again in every passing or gathering.”

80%

of young people say they **feel listened to when people remain present and engaged as they speak to them.**

75%

say they **feel listened to when they are allowed the space to say what they need to say without anyone else interjecting.**

Read more in our free report, *The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority*.

[Get more tips](#)

[Find the report on Amazon](#)



This week’s Tide Turning To-do: Practice intentional listening

Reach out to the young people in your spreadsheet this week. What are they excited about to be doing in 2021 they couldn’t do in 2020? What are they grieving? What are they celebrating? Be comfortable with pauses and silence, which can communicate that you’re digesting what they’ve said. Jot down notes about what you hear they’re saying. Follow up by asking questions to clarify or repeating what you heard as ways to help your recollection.

Make notes in your spreadsheet after the call so you don’t forget anything important.

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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 2: (I am) Named

“Adults with integrity follow up and follow through in their relationships with young people. Integrity is a core dimension of Relational Authority because following up, following through, being accountable, and being authentic are ways to demonstrate a stable and committed presence in the lives of young people. Amid superficial or fleeting connections throughout society, bonds rooted in integrity are foundational for lasting influence.

“Follow up with young people in ways that show you care about their needs. 85% of young people say that their trust in another person grows when that person takes action to respond to the young person’s needs. Following up with young people starts with remembering what was exchanged, a hallmark of listening and a foundational aspect of Relational Authority.”

Read more in our free report, *The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority*.

[Get more tips](#)

[Find it on Amazon](#)



This Week’s Tide Turning To-do:

Gather together: Practice Integrity through follow-up

In *The New Normal* ([our free guide for helping young people process the pandemic, which you can get here](#)) we share how getting together can combat isolation.

This week or next, what if you gathered a small group of young people, whether virtually or in-person? **Prep ahead by using your spreadsheet to equip you to remember a few things from your conversations with young people** and intentionally ask about them.

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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 3: (I am) Known

While becoming known is a process, it deepens and reaches another level of belongingness when a person begins feeling truly safe in a relationship or community. This depth of belongingness builds on the first two levels, being noticed and being named, but adds the all-important dimension of *unreserved acceptance*.

79%

of young people say they trust someone who shares things about their life.

Tide-Turning Tip: Young people want to know you, not just the institution you represent or the goals and purpose that drive that institution. Sharing personally about the things that matter to you—a friendship that means a lot, the type of music you love, your favorite thing to read, a question that you find yourself thinking about—adds human details to any interaction.

When shared in ways that maintain appropriate and professional boundaries, these kinds of details can become the basis for trust—which is the foundation for receptivity to new ideas and perspectives.

Read more in our free report, *The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority*.

[Get more tips](#)

[Find it on Amazon](#)



This week's Tide Turning To-do:

Practice Transparency by seeking commonalities and sharing experiences

How might you increase your transparency with the young people in your sphere this week?

Is there a story you think someone needs to hear? What have you shared about your own experiences from the last year?

Reach out, take notes, and listen, and record in your spreadsheet.

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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE



LEVEL 3: (I am) Known

If you feel inclined to pass judgment when listening to stories, opinions, or ideas of a young person, try to ask questions to learn more about where they're coming from, and enter their worldview. Even if you disagree with their conclusions or decisions, make it clear that any disagreement is not a rejection of their personhood or their standing in your relationship or community.

"Seeking commonalities follows sharing experiences for a reason. It's only when you start sharing that you can discover the nuanced ideas, hobbies, friends or favorite foods to bond over. Because experience is a form of knowledge, having someone who has gone through similar things in life gives authority to speak into and from those places of shared understanding."



80%

trust those who understand
their lived experiences.

Read more in our free report, *The State of Religion & Young People 2020: Relational Authority*.

[Get more tips](#)

[Find it on Amazon](#)

As taken from [Meaning Making: 8 Values that Drive America's Newest Generations](#) (page 103), "wherever a young person experiences a real sense of relationship—whether bridging or bonding—they are more likely to feel they belong. This sense of belonging becomes the backdrop of safety needed to explore, create, and connect in even broader ways."



Tide Turning To-do:

This week, follow up with your young people from your gathering and see if you can find something new in common. Be sure to note it in your spreadsheet.

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THE BELONGINGNESS CHALLENGE

Dear Mallorie,

I hope you've found The *Belongingness Challenge* inspiring and applicable to your work. At Springtide, we're trying to think of new ways to empower and equip trusted adults who care for young people, to care better.

[I would love to hear what you thought of the Belongingness Challenge.](#) Do you have a story you'd want to share? We're all ears—we're here to listen. Reply to this email, or you can [take our quick survey here.](#)

Also, I'd like to say THANK YOU for participating in this challenge: **save \$10 [Belonging: Reconnecting America's Loneliest Generation](#) and get free standard shipping.** We know this book will help you and others chart new courses for helping young people find and keep a place to belong.

CODE: CHALLENGE21

I am so grateful for your good work with young people. Thank you for helping turn the tide.



Gratefully,
Josh Packard, PH.D.

Executive Director,
Springtide Research Institute



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