

THE AUTHENTICITY ADVANTAGE SERIES

COFFEE WITH CHRIS

**THE POWER OF BEING REAL
IN LIFE AND BUSINESS**

CHRIS ERRINGTON



Foreword

“The kind that can’t be faked, automated, or scaled...the kind that comes from being who you really are.”

Coffee with Chris™: The Authenticity Advantage Series

by Chris Errington

This project started with a few quiet mornings by the pond...a coffee in hand...and a thought that kept circling my mind...how much life changes when you choose to lead with authenticity.

I’ve spent most of my adult life in sales, leadership, and business development...chasing results, managing people, trying to win in a world that rewards polish and performance.

But somewhere along the way I realized that the deeper reward wasn’t in the title, or the money, or the applause...it was in connection.

Real connection...the kind that can’t be faked, automated, or scaled...the kind that comes from being who you really are...not who the world tells you to be.

These essays aren’t theories...they’re stories...lessons learned the hard way through years of building relationships, leading teams, raising a family, and rebuilding my life when things fell apart...they’re about the power of authenticity...the strength of humility...and the quiet peace that comes from aligning what you do with who you are.

You’ll find stories from my work life, moments from my family life, and truths I’ve had to wrestle with on my own journey to becoming the man I’m proud to be.

If you’ve ever felt like you’re working hard but missing something...like you’ve achieved success but still feel restless...this is for you.

My hope is that these reflections remind you that your story still matters...that you still have time to live the life you actually want...and that authenticity isn’t a weakness...it’s your greatest advantage...so grab a coffee...take a breath...and let’s dive in together.

Chapter 1: The Authenticity Advantage

“There’s power in being who you are... not who you think you need to be.”

The Authenticity Advantage

There’s power in being who you are...not who you think you need to be.

I learned that the hard way...for years I tried to play the part...I thought success meant fitting into someone else’s mold...acting a certain way, talking a certain way, dressing a certain way...I tried to become what I thought people wanted instead of who I actually was.

Here’s the truth though...like dogs being able to smell fear, people can spot fake from a mile away.

The real advantage in life and business isn’t polish or perfection...it’s authenticity.

I cut my teeth in sales selling products door to door...long days, lots of walking, rejections, and more slammed doors than I could count...I remember one day walking up to a house, tired and burnt out, and deciding I was done pretending to be the perfect salesman...so I dropped the script.

I said, “Listen, I’m not here to pressure you...I’m here to share a story with you, if you’ll listen...if I can’t do that, then I’ll leave you in peace.”

The homeowner smiled, opened the door wider, and invited me in...that day I closed one of my biggest deals...and learned one of my biggest lessons.

When you stop performing and start connecting, everything changes.

Authenticity builds trust...trust builds relationships...relationships build results.

That’s the chain that never fails.

Chapter 1: The Authenticity Advantage

“There’s power in being who you are... not who you think you need to be.”

The Authenticity Advantage isn’t about selling people...it’s about alignment...when who you are matches what you do, you become unstoppable...and people can feel it.

Your words hit harder...your presence feels different...your energy attracts the right people...not just anyone, but the ones who actually belong in your circle.

Most people never get there because they’re chasing the illusion of “enough.”

Enough success...enough status...enough validation.

But the second you drop the act...you start winning for real.

That’s the secret.

The Authenticity Advantage isn’t built in a marketing department or on a social feed...it’s built in the mirror...in the moments when you choose to be yourself even when it’s easier not to.

The older I get, the more I realize that authenticity doesn’t just change how people see you...it changes how you see yourself.

It gives you peace...it gives you confidence...it gives you permission to stop pretending and start leading.

And once you taste that kind of freedom...you never go back.

Your Takeaway:

The Authenticity Advantage isn’t about being flawless...it’s about being real...stop performing...start connecting...your honesty is your edge.

Chapter 2: Connection Capital

“Connection Capital is the most valuable currency on earth... and the hardest to fake.”

Connection Capital

Everything I’ve ever achieved in business came down to one thing...connection.

Not the kind that happens when you exchange business cards or follow each other online...but the kind that builds when you look someone in the eye and make them feel seen.

That’s what I call Connection Capital...it’s the most valuable currency on earth...and the hardest to fake.

You can have the best offer, the best systems, the best brand...but if people don’t feel connected to you, it doesn’t matter.

I learned that lesson early in my sales career...I used to chase deals so hard that I forgot I was talking to people, not targets...I’d rush through conversations trying to hit my numbers...one day, my sales manager pulled me aside and said, “Chris...you’re good. But you don’t listen.”

That hit me like a 2x4 to the face...

From that day forward, I changed everything...I stopped trying to close people...and started trying to understand them...

The results? My numbers exploded...my confidence grew...my clients became friends, and my career took off.

That’s Connection Capital...you can’t buy it...you can’t automate it...you have to earn it...one conversation at a time.

Connection Capital builds over time...it’s earned when you show up, follow through, and remember details that others forget.

Chapter 2: Connection Capital

“Connection Capital is the most valuable currency on earth... and the hardest to fake.”

It's built when people feel safe with you...when they know you'll tell them the truth, even if it costs you a sale.

And once you have it...it compounds.

In every industry, Connection Capital is what separates good from great.

It's why people call you first when things go sideways...it's why your name gets mentioned in rooms you're not in...it's why opportunities start chasing you instead of the other way around.

The funny thing is...Connection Capital doesn't require talent...it requires care.

You don't have to be the smartest person in the room...you just have to be the one who genuinely gives a damn.

Every great career, every lasting relationship, every real legacy...all of it is built on Connection Capital.

And it starts with something simple...asking better questions, listening more than you talk, and meaning it when you say you care.

If you do that consistently...the rest takes care of itself.

Your Takeaway:

Connection Capital is the compound interest of human relationships...it's built by listening, caring, and showing up with intention...not just once, but over and over again.

Chapter 3: Trust Equity

“Trust is the only real equity you can’t fake.”

Trust Equity

Trust is the only real equity you can’t fake...and once you lose it, it’s almost impossible to get back.

Every relationship (business, friendship, family) runs on trust...it’s invisible but powerful...you don’t notice it until it’s gone...and when it’s gone, everything stops working.

In sales, I’ve seen people blow up million-dollar relationships because they chased short-term wins over long-term trust...they thought a quick deal was worth more than a lasting name...they were wrong.

When I worked in HVAC, there was a homeowner who didn’t buy from me during my first visit...she said, “Chris, I like you... I just don’t know if I can trust you yet.”

Instead of trying to convince her, I said, “That’s fair...I wouldn’t either if I were you...but I’m willing to earn it.”

I followed up for six months...checked in without selling...gave her advice even when it didn’t make me a dime.

One day she called and said, “You’re the only one who never pushed me. Come do the install.” That customer owned multiple rental properties that we handled over the years...and she referred me to more people than I could have ever imagined...

That’s Trust Equity.

You don’t build it by talking about it...you build it by living it.

By doing what you said you would do...even when it’s inconvenient...by telling the truth when it’s easier to lie...by choosing the hard right over the easy wrong.

Chapter 3: Trust Equity

“Trust is the only real equity you can’t fake.”

Every decision either deposits or withdraws from your trust account...and just like I was told when I was young “once trust is gone, it’s incredibly hard to win it back”.

In business, trust is more valuable than capital...because capital follows trust.

People invest in people they believe in...companies buy from people who keep their word...teams follow leaders who live what they preach.

Your reputation is your portfolio...protect it like your future depends on it...because it does.

Trust isn’t a campaign...it’s a lifestyle.

You don’t turn it on when you need it...you live it when nobody’s watching...that’s why some people have lifelong loyalty and others are always starting over.

One person keeps showing up...the other keeps making excuses.

Trust is built slowly...but it compounds fast.

Your Takeaway:

Trust Equity is the foundation of every meaningful relationship...it’s not built by promises...it’s built by proof...

Keep your word...show up...and remember every decision is either a deposit or a withdrawal.

Chapter 4: Relational Wealth

“The richest people I know aren’t the ones with the biggest houses...they’re the ones who sleep peacefully at night.”

Relational Wealth – Peace Is the Real Paycheck

There was a time when I thought success meant more...more money, more deals, more recognition...I used to chase everything that glittered because I thought it would make me feel fulfilled...but the older I get, the more I realize the richest people I know aren’t the ones with the biggest houses...they’re the ones who sleep peacefully at night.

That’s what I call Relational Wealth...it’s the kind of wealth that doesn’t show up on a balance sheet...but you feel it in your heart.

It’s the calm that comes from knowing your relationships are right...your conscience is clean...and your peace is intact.

I’ve had seasons where my bank account looked great but I felt empty...I’ve also had seasons where money was tight but my home was full of laughter...and I’ll tell you right now...I’ll take the second one every time.

Relational Wealth is built by time, truth, and trust.

It’s earned by being there for your people when it matters...not just when it’s convenient.

It’s found in forgiveness, in presence, in the quiet understanding that the people you love know you’d drop everything if they needed you.

That’s real success.

I remember a stretch when I was so focused on building big paychecks that I’d forgotten what mattered most...my wife, Chantale, looked at me one night and said something like “I don’t need you to win for us...I just need you to be here with us.”

That stopped me cold...I realized that I’d been trying so hard to build a future that I was missing the present...and that’s when it hit me...peace is the real paycheck.

Chapter 4: Relational Wealth

“The richest people I know aren’t the ones with the biggest houses...they’re the ones who sleep peacefully at night.”

Money solves problems...but peace keeps you alive.

When your relationships are healthy, everything else feels lighter...work gets easier...the days move slower...you stop measuring life by wins and start measuring it by moments...and by understanding fully that nobody is getting out of here alive and we only get one shot at this thing called life.

Relational Wealth isn’t about who owes you or what you’ve achieved...it’s about who you can call when life gets heavy.

Every man I’ve admired has one thing in common...they invested deeply in people.

They built legacies through love, not leverage...they didn’t care about being impressive...they cared about being dependable.

That’s the kind of wealth that outlives you.

Your Takeaway:

Relational Wealth is the peace that comes from putting people before profit.

Build your relationships the way you build your business...with time, intention, and care...because peace pays better than any paycheck ever will.

“The biggest returns don’t come from what you take...they come from what you give.”

The Human Dividend – Why Investing in People Always Pays

There was a time in my life when I measured success only by what was in it for me...more money...more deals...more promotions...more applause...

But life has a way of humbling you...and trust me, I’ve been humbled enough to realize the biggest returns don’t come from what you take...they come from what you give.

That’s what I call the Human Dividend.

It’s the payoff that comes from helping someone without keeping score...it’s the way generosity multiplies when you give your time, your attention, or your belief.

And it’s the only investment that’s never failed me.

I think back to a young sales rep I mentored years ago...he was green but hungry...I taught him everything I knew...how to prospect, how to build rapport, how to handle objections, how to listen instead of sell.

He left the company a year or so later to chase a bigger opportunity...I remember feeling frustrated at first...I had poured into him...and he was gone.

But a few months later, he called...he said, “Chris, I wouldn’t be where I am without what you taught me. I just wanted to say thank you.”

That one call was worth more to me than any commission check.

That’s the Human Dividend.

When you invest in people, you might not see the return right away...it might not come in dollars...but it always comes...in trust...in loyalty...in peace of mind.

Chapter 5: The Human Dividend

“The biggest returns don’t come from what you take...they come from what you give.”

You’ll see it when someone pays forward what you taught them...you’ll feel it when your team rallies around you during a tough season...you’ll know it when people speak well of you long after you’re gone.

In business, it’s easy to get transactional...we think about KPIs, revenue, contracts, deliverables...but the truth is, business runs on people, not paperwork.

And when you treat people like long-term investments instead of short-term assets, you build something money can’t buy...influence.

Every conversation is a seed...some grow fast, some take years, but all of them grow into something when you plant them with intention.

My son Bubba reminds me of that every day...every time I show up to play catch, feed a hitting machine, talk about the game, or just listen, I’m investing...not in a result but in a long term relationship that will last for years upon years.

And it those small deposits you invest into people’s lives that will turn into something much bigger...when you pour into people, you’re building something that outlives you.

That’s legacy...that’s the Human Dividend.

Your Takeaway:

You don’t have to be rich to be generous...you just have to care enough to give without expecting a return...because when you invest in people, the dividends always show up...in ways that matter most.

The Trust Economy – Character Still Beats Code

Technology keeps moving faster....every week there's a new platform, tool, or app that promises to automate another part of life...it's actually both awesome and incredibly frightening all at the same time...in all my years in business, I've learned that no amount of automation can replace human trust.

You can have the best software in the world, but if people don't believe you, they won't buy from you...that's what I call the Trust Economy.

I remember losing a big deal years ago to a competitor who offered “better tech than you and with a lower price”...and even though it hurt to lose the sale, I was sincere when I suggested that, if this truly was the case, that they should go with that offer over mine...a few months later, that same client called me back and said, “We learned the hard way. The other company said they had better tech than you, but they clearly exaggerated their solution. We should have trusted you the first time.” That call meant more than their contract and their referrals.

It reminded me that while technology can make things faster, it doesn't make them better without character behind it...the Trust Economy rewards reliability, not flash.

Technology and automation has changed everything...customer portals, AI quoting tools, instant updates...all good things...but here's the thing...when something goes wrong, nobody calls a chatbot...they call a person they trust.

That's the gap no machine can fill.

Trust is the invisible infrastructure that keeps business moving...it's the reason clients renew...it's the reason employees stay...it's the reason reputations outlive industries.

The Trust Economy doesn't care how clever your marketing sounds or how modern your systems are...it only cares about one question...do people believe you? And if they do, you win.

Chapter 6: The Trust Economy

“No amount of automation can replace human trust.”

I've built my career on simple principles...tell the truth...follow through...own your mistakes...do that consistently, and you'll build more trust than any brand campaign ever could.

Your name will become your greatest asset.

The irony of the world we live in is that trust is becoming rarer while also more valuable every day...people have learned to question everything...news and media outlets, headlines, contracts, even compliments.

So when they meet someone who's real...someone who says what they mean and means what they say...it stands out like a light in a dark room.

That's the real edge.

We're living in an era where attention is cheap, but trust is priceless...and if you can become someone others trust...consistently, quietly, authentically...you'll never need to sell as hard again.

Because in the Trust Economy, character still beats code.

Your Takeaway:

Trust is still the highest form of currency...in a world that values speed and noise, integrity wins over algorithms.

If you want to future-proof your business, build a name people believe in.

The Priority of Presence – Why Showing Up Is Still the Edge

There's a secret about business that most people forget...the ones who win are usually the ones who show up.

Not just when it's convenient...not only when there's money on the line...but every day, through the seasons when nobody's watching.

That's the Priority of Presence...it's the edge you get when you out-care the competition...when you make the extra call, send the follow-up, or show up at a client's office just to shake a hand and check in.

Because at the end of the day, people don't remember the pitch...they remember the person.

My daughters both dance professionally...when they were younger, they had countless dance recitals and competitions...long days of watching other kids (that I didn't know) while waiting for my girls to dance for a few minutes...one time, during the week, I got up early to drive the hour and a half to go watch them perform and then immediately had to leave to drive the hour and a half back to make it to work in time...but I'd do it all over again for the smiles I got and my girls knowing that I was willing to be there for them...

That moment reminded me of something I'd forgotten in business...presence matters more than perfection.

People want to know you're there.

In sales, in leadership, in family (especially with family), showing up consistently builds something that strategy can't replace...trust.

Chapter 7: The Priority of Presence

“Presence matters more than perfection.”

It's the same with clients...you can automate messages and schedule follow-ups, but you can't automate presence.

When you make time for people, it leaves an impression that lasts longer than any pitch deck.

I've seen a lot of people lose deals because they stopped showing up once the ink was dry...they got busy chasing the next thing, and the relationship faded.

But the best business people (the ones who build careers that last decades) never stop showing up...proving every time that they're steady, reliable, present...committed to the Priority of Presence.

The same truth applies at home...you can't be a great leader at work if you're absent where it matters most.

Your kids don't care how many calls you closed...they care that you were there when it counted...your spouse doesn't need another promise about the future...they need your presence in the moment.

Showing up doesn't mean being perfect...it means being present.

Prioritizing presence isn't flashy...it's quiet...it's simple...but it's the reason people stay loyal, the reason teams trust you, and the reason relationships deepen over time.

In a world full of shortcuts...showing up is still the edge.

Your Takeaway:

You can't outsource presence...you can't delegate care...the people who win long term aren't the smartest or the loudest...they're the ones who keep showing up when others don't.

Chapter 8: The Authentic Leader

“Vulnerability doesn’t make people doubt you...it makes them believe you.”

The Authentic Leader – How Realness Builds Real Teams

For a long time I thought leadership was about strength...never showing weakness...never letting people see you struggle...I thought the best leaders had all the answers and never doubted themselves.

Then I lived long enough to learn that the best leaders aren’t the ones who look invincible...they’re the ones who stay honest.

Authentic leadership isn’t about having power...it’s about having presence...it isn’t about managing people...it’s about inspiring trust.

When you lead with honesty people don’t just follow your title...they follow your example.

I remember a time when things weren’t going well at work...numbers were down, morale was low, and I was trying to hold everything together...I could feel my team’s frustration but I didn’t know what to say that wouldn’t sound like another pep talk.

One morning I walked into the meeting room, looked around at everyone, and said, “I don’t have all the answers right now...but I promise I’m not giving up.”

The whole room changed...the tension dropped...it felt like everyone exhaled at once.

That’s when I learned that vulnerability doesn’t make people doubt you...it makes them believe you.

Authentic leaders aren’t perfect...they’re consistent...they tell the truth, admit mistakes, and take responsibility when things fall apart...they lead through character, not control.

People will forgive mistakes...but they won’t forgive dishonesty.

Chapter 8: The Authentic Leader

“Vulnerability doesn’t make people doubt you...it makes them believe you.”

As my hair (what’s left anyways) continues to go more and more grey, the more I realize that leadership is less about having followers and more about creating believers...you don’t build believers by pretending to be bulletproof...you build them by living with integrity and staying human.

Authentic leadership is contagious...when you show up real your team feels safe to do the same...when they see you admit a mistake they learn it’s okay to learn...when they see you handle pressure with calm instead of pride or ego, they rise with you instead of against you.

This applies at home too...my wife and kids don’t need me to be perfect...they need me to be present...they need to see that even when life gets hard I don’t hide behind pride...that’s leadership...not just in business, but in life.

So if you’re leading a team, a business, or even your family, remember this...the real ones don’t fake strength...they build it through honesty, humility, and consistency...the world doesn’t need more polished leaders...it needs more authentic ones.

Authenticity doesn’t just build teams...it builds trust...and trust is what makes people follow you when the road gets hard.

That’s authentic leadership.

Your Takeaway:

Leadership isn’t about pretending to be strong...it’s about being real enough to earn trust...

People don’t need you to be perfect...they need you to be present, honest, and human...when you lead that way, you don’t have to push people forward...they’ll want to follow you there.

Final Reflection

“The reward isn’t the applause... it’s knowing you didn’t quit when you could have.”

Final Reflection – The Work Is Worth It

I’ve had a lot of early mornings and late nights by the pond thinking about everything I’ve built...and everything I’ve broken along the way.

The truth is, none of this has been easy...building a career, a family, a legacy...it all comes with moments that test what you’re really made of...you fight for progress, you stumble, you question, and sometimes you start over completely.

But every bit of it...every mistake, every rebuild, every conversation with yourself wondering if you’re doing enough...it all matters...because the effort changes you.

There’s a kind of peace that only comes from staying in the fight long enough to see the purpose behind it...the long calls, the slow months, the missed chances...they all carve out something in you that comfort never could.

If you’ve ever felt like you’re running out of time or like you should be further ahead...take a breath...you’re right where you’re supposed to be.

The point isn’t perfection...it’s progress.

The reward isn’t the applause...it’s knowing you didn’t quit when you could have.

When I look at my life...my wife’s belief in me...my kids growing into their own dreams...the people who’ve trusted me with their business...I realize that this was never about building a business...it was about becoming a man who could lead with honesty and finish with peace...that’s what all of this comes down to.

So whatever season you’re in...keep going...keep showing up...keep choosing real over easy.

Because that effort is worth it...always.

About the Author

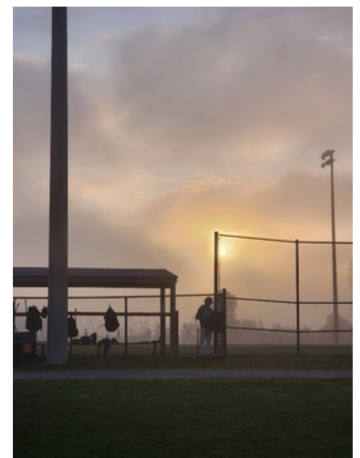
Chris Errington

Chris Errington is a Canadian entrepreneur, storyteller, and strategic connector who helps people find alignment, purpose, and freedom through real stories of grit, faith, and growth.

After nearly three decades in sales and leadership, Chris has become well known for his ability to build strong long term relationships and networks...to bridge the gap between relationships and results...and helping businesses grow through authenticity, trust, and connection.

When he's not helping clients or building content for Coffee with Chris™, you'll find him smashing softballs into the night sky, throwing weights around the gym or sharing a coffee and stories by the pond with his family.

Stay Connected by visiting www.ChrisErrington.com, following @E2EChris on X/IG/TikTok/Youtube and on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/in/chriserrington



“Build with Grit, Lead with Heart”





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