

“In *The Transparent Life*, McKrae Game has given to us a great example of transparency and what the grace of God in Jesus Christ can do when one is willing to be honest and intentional. The application of this book goes far beyond just dealing with homosexuality. In a day when society takes the attitude that ‘nothing can be done’ to deal with these issues, McKrae uses his experience to show how the power of the gospel makes the difference. God has used this ministry and I believe this book is a resource that will give help and hope for people who are willing to be transparent and put their trust in the Lord Jesus who died on the cross in order that we might have life and have it more abundantly. Those who read it will immediately think of those with whom they should share it.”

—Dr. Michael Hamlet  
Pastor, First Baptist North Spartanburg  
Spartanburg, South Carolina

---

“I have known McKrae Game for over 10 years. McKrae was instrumental in helping me start my ministry. If not for his wisdom, guidance, and support, I doubt I would still be doing this ministry work. McKrae has been known in our circles for many years as being a man of full transparency. He lives what he teaches. He cares deeply for others and is willing to show that in sacrificial and tangible ways, even if it means letting his own vulnerabilities be revealed. His perspectives are much-needed in the church at large, and I believe can be revelational to the body of Christ.”

—Meleah Allard  
Executive Director, New Beginning Support Ministry  
Western North Carolina

---

“McKrae Game has given us a much-needed tool drawn from both personal and ministry experience. When believers take off their masks and choose honesty over pretense, the results are potent, and here’s a book which explains how and why that needs to be done.”

—Joe Dallas  
Speaker and Author of *The Game Plan*, *Breaking Free from Porn*,  
*When Homosexuality Hits Home*, and more

---

“As the Bible allows us to look into the lives of real individuals and discloses the good, the bad, and the ugly, *The Transparent Life* is a book about real people with real struggles. Its message of hope is contained in the invitation to enter into honest relationships as we learn that ‘struggling’ is a part of the human condition which can draw us closer to God and others.”

—Andria L. Sigler-Smalz, M.A.  
Director, Journey Christian Ministries  
Lake Elsinore, California

“McKrae Game, a joyful and faithful husband and father, breaks the mold of cultural respectability that keeps so many suffering in secret shame, and writes of his rich experiences of how the love of God reaching through ordinary people meets each one in the nitty-gritty struggles of daily life. In this book, he shares the essential truths that lead to freedom in most any struggle: that honesty and humility in a daily walk of faith and trust brings liberation, not only for the one who discloses, but also for those who hear the disclosure.”

—Sonia Balcer  
Director, Safe Passage Ministry  
Los Angeles, California

---

“McKrae Game, Founder and President of the Hope for Wholeness Network, has written a powerful, timely, and much-needed book. Long recognized as a proponent of living openly and honestly about his life in Christ, McKrae’s self-disclosure of his years in, and then out of, homosexuality is a refreshing journey in which he shares the pain, joy, challenges, struggles, and commitment of living a life dedicated to Christ, intent on apprehending God’s plan and purposes for him.

McKrae’s use of Scripture passages lays a biblical foundation on which the reader can build toward living a godly life through transparency, confession, repentance, and God’s healing process.

In my opinion, *The Transparent Life* is a must-read book for anyone struggling with a secret sin or shame from the past. The Lord can bring healing. It is for ministers and therapists who counsel people through difficult times, and particularly for pastors to set an example for those in their own congregations to live before God in a healthier way, through transparency and openness.

McKrae shares clear steps to accomplish these landmarks in your journey with the Lord. I believe you will be glad to have invested in your own journey by acquiring *The Transparent Life*.”

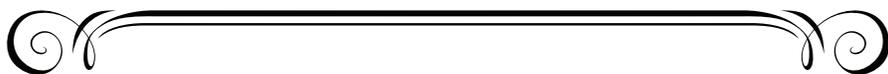
—Daniel Mingo  
Director, Abba’s Delight  
Louisville, Kentucky

---

“This book is sure to be a great help in dispelling the myths that have eradicated truth from grace in our culture. McKrae Game is a voice that deserves a hearing—his work, I’m certain, will salvage lives.”

—Dr. David (Johnny) Nixon  
Chairman, Born That Way Ministries, Inc.  
Doerun, Georgia

*The*  
**Transparent**  
*Life*



Learning to Live  
without a Mask

**McKrae Game**



*The Transparent Life*  
Copyright © 2015 McKrae Game

ISBN: 978-1-942508-09-0

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—without prior written consent from the publisher.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®, Copyright© 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society, Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House, The “NIV” and “New International Version” trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by International Bible Society.

Published by Touch Publishing  
P.O. Box 180303  
Arlington, TX 76096  
[www.TouchPublishingServices.com](http://www.TouchPublishingServices.com)

Cover design by Touch Publishing

To connect with the author and his ministry, visit  
[www.HopeforWholeness.org](http://www.HopeforWholeness.org)

The stories in chapter 28 are used with permission.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2015940340

Printed in the United States of America on acid-free paper

# Acknowledgements

---

First and foremost, my inspiration and guidance was from God who, since I asked Christ into my life, has led each of my steps. He made Himself evident to me when I was lost and struggling to find my way. He brought me to Himself, raised me up, and will continue His ongoing work until I meet Him face to face.

I love to tell the story of how my amazing wife and I found each other; a five-year journey that can only be explained as a work of God. Julie and Jesus are the two that have made this venture of The Transparent Life possible. My wife allows me to be me. She allows me to tell our story and does not wince. I'm sure the first time she was fearful. Though she doesn't see herself as clearly as I do, she's one of the most genuine and wise women I know. I believe the incredible value of our marriage can inspire many. Julie has been a constant source of encouragement to me. For years, she said, "You need to start your book." Seeing other couples' messes, she's learned that there are messes everywhere, some people just won't admit it. I lift my wife up and say, "Thank you God for trusting me with her." I'm truly blessed!

I'm thankful for my friends and mentors: Tony Moore, Randy Hahn, Mike Hamlet, Art McQueen, Sam Hunter, Reid Lehman, and Rex Blanton.

For my mother, father, and sister. My family wasn't what it could have been, but what it was helped shape me into the man I am. My stepfather, Bill Wakefield, who has passed, was always supportive of me morally and financially. My mom has been a source of incredible support and generosity, which allowed us to step out in faith and start our ministry. My father and I have grown closer over the years, especially as I have grown to realize how difficult life can be. My father was astounded, but agreed, when I told him I believed God

wanted him to give me \$10,000 to start my ministry. And he did. My sister allows me to write about her and the drama of our entangled lives that led to much of who I am. I know that brother/sister relationships can be trying, especially early in life.

There are too many men and women to mention that have poured into me and have been a source of support and encouragement. Without their help, prayers, and financial giving, this book and ministry would not be possible.

God has surrounded me with godly, encouraging men and women. Women like Nylene Wilds, my office manager, and Rita Brown, a friend who volunteers her time to our ministry, Terri Dillard, the paralegal whose office is in the same building as ours and who, for over ten years, always has had something wise to say and is an example of transparency, wisdom, and grace through some extremely difficult times. Jeanie Smith, from the very beginning of our ministry, was a friend and counselor.

I owe thanks to Tony Moore who has edited every article and project I've written since I've known him. He is a great and wise friend who has listened to my unfiltered rants and confessions over the years. Also, Tom Cole, Bob Brantley, Brian Hennecy, Tyler Kirby, and Tom Vinegar have heard my confessions and remained my friends. There have been many more through the years. Thank you.

For the pastors who are transparent. You inspired me and helped me know that the direction God was leading me was right, and I was not alone.

I'm thankful to everyone who's touched my life, for good or bad, because each of you have shaped me to be a man that I happen to like and am thankful for.

I dedicate this book to you and ask that you join me in praying that this be an encouragement and a stretching point for all those who read it.

# Contents

---

Introduction	1
1: Fake It Till You Make It	5
2: Who Am I?	9
3: In Christ	15
4: Transparency	21
5: Who's in Charge?	25
6: Introverts vs. Extroverts	31
7: The Church	39
8: Secrets	45
9: One to Another	53
10: Finding Relief and Coming Out	57
11: Finding Acceptance	63
12: Struggling	67
13: The Pit	73
14: Confession	77
15: "Keep Quiet!"	83
16: The Need for Intimacy	91
17: Letting People In	99
18: Accountability Friendships	109
19: Letting Your Spouse In	115
20: Letting Family In	123
21: Letting Friends In	133
22: It Gets Better	143
23: The Pursuit of Wisdom	147
24: God's Scalpel	153
25: Pornography	159
26: Church Leadership	167
27: Homosexuality	177
28: Testimonies of Transparent Living	189
Addendum: Is Change Possible?	203
Closing	205



# Introduction

---

Why am I writing this book? Who am I to write this book? Who is this book for? Why should you read this book? Why should you follow my advice?

For starters, I am The Transparent Life. I didn't realize I was unique in being open about my life until I started helping others. In everything I do and we do as an organization, I want the message of transparency to be a key element.

Before we even begin, I want you to know that YOU ARE NOT ALONE. I want you to hear this in the deep recesses of your mind that have become convinced that you are alone. You aren't.

I'm writing this book as a challenge to a mainstream flow of thinking, especially in the Church, that I believe is very flawed. Some may argue with my message here, but I personally do not believe that the argument is with me but with God's Word. It's not flashing lights or the latest styles that cause churches to thrive, but growth and success comes to those that are willing to be built on vulnerability, care, compassion, and a genuine interest in others.

Who is this book for? Everyone longs for intimacy, but most are fearful of it and may have even been warned against it. It takes risk, serious risk. This is perhaps the biggest hurdle. Women may be more inclined towards communication, but most fear feeling stupid or, even worse, rejection. It doesn't matter your age, you're never too young or too old to reach out to someone and ask for help. You don't have to be alone. This book both does and does not have to do with my past. It has to do with EVERYONE'S past.

Why should you read this book? Dr. Phil (a U.S. television therapist) often asks guests on his show, "How's that working for you?" Let me ask you: Is life working for you? In all honesty, are you sincerely happy and successful? For those in dysfunction, the answer seems obvious. But this book is also for those who are not on anti-depressants, sleep meds, alcohol, or drugs, or who don't deal with pornography, sexual addiction, or eating disorders. This book directs you how to find freedom and what

freedom means.

For “normal” people, it’s a way for you to escape the trap of “normal” and be used by God. Actually, it’s a way for us ALL to be used by God.

For too long, pastors, counselors, friends, and family members have encouraged anyone with a secret to keep “it” a secret. “Don’t tell anyone, they’ll reject you.” I believe this has been contrived by the enemy, Satan, to keep us all in bondage, divided, alone, and of no threat to him.

The basis of this book is found in three Bible verses that I teach and live by: James 5:16, 1 Corinthians 10:13, and Revelation 12:11. These are a concert of verses that work in tangent with one another. Each brings the other alive, with Revelation 12:11 being the crescendo. When I started out, I did not plan for this to be a Bible study, but with the almost 200 verses throughout, rest assured that my intention is to be biblically based.

Who am I? I don’t feel that special. I’m only known in my niché circle of ministry. I’m hoping that the niché or my story doesn’t distract from this much needed message of *The Transparent Life*. I’ve been honored several times to speak in venues where it did not touch my past. My story will certainly be woven throughout the book, but I do not want my story to be the focus. Who I am is not what is important in reference to the premise of the book. If you do not share my past, please try to not let my story cause you to think, “Sure that’s his life but I’m nothing like him.” I hope you will look deeper, past what you can’t relate to, and realize that there’s something here for you, too.

What is unique about me is my willingness to speak. Maybe it was growing up in an extremely vocal family where you had to stand up for your beliefs. There was constant screaming and yelling, and there was no respect for the one who did not fight for what he believed. I was too fearful to scrap it out, and I didn’t really know what I believed, other than, “Y’all are crazy!” Today, I respect that my father challenged me to stand for what I believed.

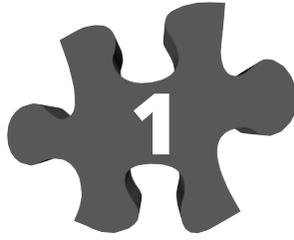
It was only after getting into ministry that I realized how paralyzed people are by their fear of others. Worse than the fear of people finding out about their lifestyle, behaviors, or addictions is the paralyzing fear of what others might think of them. This is a fear that I too had to conquer, and if I’m not careful I can let it rear its ugly head once again. I’m not referring to slothfulness, where you refuse to bathe or dress appropriately or act appropriately in certain settings. I’m speaking of

---

allowing people to know us—really know us. And even beyond this, to be used by the Lord through this vulnerability, as I point to in Revelation 12:11.

So why listen to me? Why take my advice? I'm not perfect. I still struggle in many ways. I will be extremely personal in the pages that follow. Those who know me, watch my videos, or read my articles, know I am very open about my life and struggles. However, there is nothing that dominates me or rules me today. I am a man that has no secrets. Can you say that? I hope so. You might think that's crazy. This might not be a book for the CIA agent or undercover cop to do his or her job effectively, but for all else I believe that this is how we find our freedom and our "healing," as spoken of in James 5:16.





# Fake It Till You Make It

---

Niceties and clichés really bug me. I’ve always lived in South Carolina, where polite hospitality is expected. Everyone asks, “How are you doing?” The problem is that polite expressions elicit canned responses.

A few years ago, I pulled up to a drive-through and got an overly nice greeting from the voice inside the speaker. When I got to the window, even more so. It was the typical, but very enthusiastic, “How are you doing today?”

I said to the polite young man, rather rudely in response, “I really appreciate your gesture, but I assume you don’t want to actually know how I’m doing, so I’ll respond how you expect. I’m doing very well, thank you.”

The puzzled look on his face said everything. I was supposed to reply, “Fine, thank you.” In hindsight, I feel kind of bad about it, but honestly the niceties we give one another as we go through life are a pet peeve of mine. Does anyone really care? I believe many do care, but showing real concern takes breaking past the niceties and expected answers to which we are so accustomed.

At the time I came to faith in Christ, I was a part of an organization named Amway. They always encouraged their followers to “Fake it till you make it.” We were told, “When people ask you how you are doing, tell them you are fantastic! Awesome! Great! It doesn’t matter how you feel. Your feelings will catch up to your attitude.” On many levels that is true, but it is equally not true. We know what’s behind the mask.

When we go into a convenience store and hear, “How are you doing today?” I don’t think most of us are thinking that the polite sales clerk is in ministerial mode and wants us to share all of our problems with him or her, and I certainly wouldn’t encourage the rude response I gave at the drive-through. However, what about when we go to church?

Work? Family events? These events are not overly intimate settings where we feel we can share how we are actually doing. While “Fake it till you make it” is what we normally hear, how about “Deal until we heal”? To live a transparent life, I believe that in order to heal we must begin to REVEAL. The “fake it until you make it” adage may work for closing the sale or causing a friend to think that you’re “all that,” but you know the true man or woman behind the mask.

Some years ago, I was invited to visit an unusually different church in Asheville, North Carolina. I didn’t know what was meant at the time by “different,” I’d only heard it was very casual. A friend of mine was speaking there that day, so it wasn’t going to be the usual Sunday service. I pulled up to an inner-city building with the church name written in graffiti on the wall. There were as many street people there as normal everyday people. Some (I judgmentally determined by their appearance) may have left their alcohol and crack pipes outside the door as they came in. I tried to control my judgments, as I was certainly out of the element of my typical Sunday worship service. It wasn’t a very large place, so I stood towards the back. The worship was contemporary and good; it had an intimate feel. If you’ve experienced a variety of worship venues, you’ll understand what I mean when I say “intimate” or “authentic.” If not, let me just say, there was a kinship in the air.

From my place near the back, I saw a guy with a rough-exterior who was probably in his fifties, and who definitely looked homeless. I’ll call him John. An average-looking young guy, maybe in his thirties, who I’ll call Jeff, walked up to John, and said, “Hey John. I’ve missed seeing you. Where’ve you been? What’s up? Are you doing OK?”

I expected the typical, “I’m fine, good, or great” response that we’re all used to hearing and giving. Instead, John looked right into Jeff’s eyes and said, “I haven’t been doing too well. I’ve been really struggling.” After I got over the “Wow, that’s not a typical response,” going on in my brain, I saw Jeff respond so intimately. While these two men obviously did not share the same generation or socio-economic background, they shared something that we all have the opportunity to share—our humanity.

I don’t know how long these men had known each other. Maybe not long. Maybe they weren’t close. Obviously they didn’t talk every day or every week, by John’s absence and Jeff’s questions. Yet, it seems that this was a typical relationship in that place—one that so many of us don’t share at church or at work or even in our families. These men,

---

from completely different backgrounds, were showing us ALL how to live. Despite John's homelessness, or at the very least coming from a very different background than Jeff, and despite him saying that he wasn't doing well, John may be one of the most well-adjusted men I've encountered.

John was willing to do something that so few of us will do. John revealed his vulnerabilities and admitted that he had not been doing well. But he was in God's house and was opening up to God's people. Many of us would have seen John and made unkind judgments about him because of his dress, his scraggly hair and beard, and his poorly kept teeth. He may have been either a struggling alcoholic or struggling drug abuser, maybe both, maybe much worse. However, how many of us look beautiful on the outside, but are a total mess on the inside?

How many of us, when greeted by someone in church, would respond, "I'm fantastic" when, in reality, we are a total mess? How many of us think that no one cares, as I rudely assumed of that sales clerk, and assume that people would judge us if they knew the mess inside of our lives?

Outside of John's admission, did he have anyone in his life other than Jeff? Obviously I don't know, but I certainly hope so. However, he was doing what few people would do with those who are considered close family and friends. In that, there is a great lesson to be learned.