



# That Makes Two of Us

Lifestyle Mentoring for Women

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Foreword by Gary Smalley

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## **Preface**

I would never, in a million years have considered myself a mentor. And never in *two* million thought that I would be writing a guide for women on mentoring!

I am not well read or an educator, and don't consider myself brilliant by any stretch of the imagination! I am just an everyday woman. I struggle with the same things you struggle with. I love the same stuff you love and I have vices and temptations just like you do! But God wants to use me ... and he wants to use you too!

In my early years as a pastor's wife I sometimes felt inadequate and under qualified in nearly every area of my life. I knew all of the principals of 'spiritual health', I had the 'forsake not the assembly' and 'fellowship' down pat! But when it came to discipleship or evangelism, my score card dipped drastically! And when it came to 'passing on what I know' and investing in the next generation ... forget it!

But a few years ago, I realized that I didn't have to be at a certain level with certain criteria before God could use me. In fact, **I** was setting that criteria for myself, not God. He was ready to use me all the time, but I had to be ready and willing to step out in faith and act when He put opportunities in front of me.

Looking back over my life, I had been involved in discipling and mentoring moments tons of times. I just didn't look at what I was doing as 'spiritual'. I saw my actions as nothing more than being a friend, hanging out with a younger woman, one just a little behind me in the stages of life.

I see things differently now.

My husband calls it 'the gift of hang' ... seeing the opportunity to spend time with younger women and intentionally watching for the times I can inject a 'God moment' or 'life lesson' into the mix.

God wants to use you, right now just as you are. He probably already IS using you to impact other women ... you just don't see it.

That's why Walk With Me was developed. So you can see the next generation through a different lens, you can recognize the opportunities God has put in front of you, and you can act on them.

It's easy, it's fun, it isn't time intensive, and best of all, it's how God designed discipleship and mentoring to be!

If I can do this, believe me, YOU can do this!!!!

## Walk With Me ...

### An Invitation to Impact the Next Generation

*4 We will not hide these truths from our children we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders. 5 For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, 6 so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children.*

*Psalm 78:4-6 NLT*

Several years ago God put a 19 year old woman in my life named Cathi. We met in the music ministry at our church and shared an instant connection. She worked in the same building as my husband at the church so I started intentionally dropping by her desk whenever I came to visit him. It was during these impromptu chats that our relationship really began. I started taking her to lunch, emailing her, and occasionally called to check on her. Eventually I asked her to go shopping, or I would call her up to make a quick COSTCO run with me. We would talk about all sorts of things, from recipes to ministry. I never would have considered our relationship to be a 'mentoring' relationship. But it was!

As my relationship with Cathi grew, I realized she was opening up to me about more personal, even deeper things. She had questions about God, spirituality, the future of the church, the Bible, and even just the every day stuff of life. I was no expert in these areas, and never pretended to be. I tried to let my life speak louder than my words, and she seemed alright with and even drawn to that. God showed me I didn't have to be a Bible scholar or great teacher to mentor. I just needed to have the freedom to be me, to be available and to be willing to share what I already know.

After a while Cathi started introducing me to her friends and we would all spend time together. Before long I realized that they were all struggling with the same questions and issues, and had few people to turn to for answers other than their peers. That's when I realized how great the need was in that generation. They all needed a woman that was a little older, a little wiser, and a little farther down the road than they were, but willing to be real and vulnerable with them. They needed someone to walk with them through life situations. They needed someone to listen, not remedy or solve their problems. Someone who would will first love them, but then talk with them, guide them, and point them in the right direction. They needed someone who loves and trusts God, but messes up and is willing to talk about it!

Mentoring relationships were the way to connect with the next generation. I knew that other women like me were just the ones for the job. But I hate the word mentoring. It seems to conjure up, thoughts of overwhelming responsibility, endless supplies of wisdom, long-term commitments and time-consuming meetings. So how could I get past this overwhelming, unattainable job of mentoring without asking them to add another task to their already jam-packed schedules?

God had the answer to all of my questions... *Walk With Me: An Invitation to Impact the Next Generation*. How? By *lifestyle* mentoring!

So how is *Walk With Me* different from conventional mentoring programs? *Walk With Me* is an informal, yet intentional mentoring model. It is informal in that it is unstructured; there is no curriculum, there is no formula for how to spend your time, or even a time commitment, and there is no 3<sup>rd</sup> party matching (unless you want to count God as that 3<sup>rd</sup> party!). It is a totally organic process.

Totally organic, but completely intentional. You will begin to cultivate relationships intentionally as you start to view the next generation through a different lens. You will see conversations as opportunities to share what God has taught you through your own personal experiences and through Scripture. The difference? **You do this through relationship, not a program.**

God has shown me through this journey that mentoring is not just about going through a book or sitting down and doing a Bible study together. It's about walking through life together. It's simple, convenient, fun, but most of all, it is God's plan to help spiritual growth happen.

Bottom line, ***mentoring is not a program, it's a lifestyle.*** It's developing a friendship with someone one step behind you in the journey of life, spending time with them recognizing the fact that God has put you together for a purpose, and making a point to interject life lessons and point out God-moments as you go ... *together!*

You may be thinking, "Mentoring can't be that simple!" I assure you it can. Cathi and I have developed the following guide to help you understand lifestyle mentoring and the importance of investing in the next generation. We are confident there is a quality mentor within each of you!

So we ask you to accept our invitation to impact the next generation ... life to life.

You can do this!  
Let us show you how!

### **Why does the Next Generation need a different kind of mentoring?**

*And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. ... New wine calls for new wineskins." Mark 2:22 NLT*

Now is the time for new wine skins. The new wine, in this case, is the amazingly complex generation called 'GenY', 'Bridgers', 'Mosaics' and/or 'EchoBoomers and the younger 'Gen X'" ... Whatever you label you give that generation, they are full of life and flavor and bursting at the seams to contribute to their world.

The new wine skin? The way to reach them ... lifestyle mentoring. The methods that we used to reach the next generation 25 – 30 years ago or even 10 years ago are not effective with this generation today.

How can we impact them? We must first try to understand them.

*Echo boomers are a reflection of the sweeping changes in American life over the past 20 years. They are the first to grow up with computers at home, in a 500-channel TV universe. They are multi-taskers with cell phones, music downloads, and Instant Messaging on the Internet. They are totally plugged- in citizens of a worldwide community.<sup>1</sup>*

Steve Kroft, CBS Correspondant  
Children of Baby Boomers

This is the generation born between the year 1977 and 1995. These dates vary depending on the source. But this fact stands firm ... This generation is the generation of baby boomer children.. It is the largest generation since the boomers themselves, 72 million strong. It is the most studied generation by sociologists, demographers and marketing consultants since their parents.

*They will be the dominant adult population group for at least the first half of the next century. In 1995, the bridgers accounted for 27.5% of the total U.S. population. Though the boomers were slightly larger, the bridgers will be the ones moving into positions of power and influence in the twenty first century.<sup>2</sup>*

Thom S. Rainer, Bridgers

In Thom Rainer's book, Bridgers, he makes a revealing comparison between the Boomer and Bridgers generations, The following is an extremely small portion of his findings:

#### **Two Different Worlds**

##### **Boomers**

Economic prosperity  
Mother's care  
"Father Knows Best"  
Ma Bell  
Free love  
VD  
Monocultural

##### **Bridgers**

Economic Uncertainty  
Day Care  
Father isn't home  
Internet  
Condoms  
AIDS  
Multicultural

Source: *American Demographics*, Thom Rainer, Bridgers

Does this sound like the childhood that we, the boomer generation, grew up in? Not in the slightest! But Bridgers are definitely a product of the environment in which they were raised.

The things that we invented, developed, and discovered as a generation, have become the normal, everyday, commonplace and even routine tools of the EchoBoomers.

<sup>1</sup> CBS, Steve Kroft Children of the Baby Boomers, 9/4/2005

<sup>2</sup> Bridgers, Thom Rainer, 2007

Think about it. Our generation invented the computer. This generation doesn't know how to function without one. Our generation started out with a telephone connected to the wall, progressed to a cordless and then to wireless. This generation vaguely remembers the phones attached to the wall, their parents and some of their friends own cordless, but their phone of choice is cellular. They are always accessible and don't know what it's like to be some place where they can't call or talk with someone else.

Let's put this in perspective. When I (a boomer) was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, I vividly remember my parent's purchase of a brand new car. A sweet teal colored Chevrolet Impala. But the really cool thing about it was that it had seat belts in it! A first! Not the shoulder harness kind of course... that came later. Just the plain, over your lap seat belts! I'll never forget this because I was so excited that I told my second grade class about it at show and tell ... 2 days in a row! I was sure that I was the envy of all of my peers! In contrast, the oldest member of the EchoBoomer generation has never known life without a seatbelt. They came out of the womb, into our arms and into a car seat and THEN home!

And think about this. Since they were babies, they've been put in front of the TV or at least with the TV on. NOW there are actually DVD's geared toward babies. Their classrooms settings have gone from individualized learning to team learning. Educators have realized that this next generation learns best in team. They do projects in team, they study in team, they practice in teams, they compete in teams and they even test in teams. Why does this method of teaching work? EchoBoomers aren't necessarily motivated by the thought of being better than everyone else in their class., as their parents were motivated to be. But, they don't want to be the weak link. So, therefore they are motivated to work hard so that their entire team succeeds! Basically, the success of the team takes precedent over the success of the individual.

This generation learned to depend on each other from a very young age. They also began to rely less on the adults in their life. Remember, this is the generation who grew up with Baby Boomer parents. The boomer generation is the generation where dual income households became the norm instead of the exception. So, when homework needed to be done, the first step was to call a friend. Networks were developed and established called 'Homework Hotlines' to help kids with homework questions when no one was around to answer them.

This generation is also called the pampered generation. They have been protected and coddled since they were born. They have never ridden a bike without a helmet and never learned any 'roller' activity without the presence of elbow, wrist and knee pads. We've cheered them on no matter how bad they were at something. To boost their self-esteem, everybody got a trophy at the end of the season, not just those that stood out in the 'talent' pool. The generation lived with a 'grade on the curve' mentality and some educators even adopted the 'independent spelling' philosophy with the mindset that computers will catch it at spell-check. This 'good intention' of the boomer generation has caused EchoBoomers to expect the same things in the work force. Reward for a less than a stellar job.

In contrast, we boomers worked our butts off and the kid that won everything in every sport always got the 'Most Valuable Player' award. The phrases 'Suck it up', 'Get Tough', 'Work hard' and 'Finish what you start!' were the mantras of our generation. I think my even parents bought me a trophy once!! I loved it!

And safety gear? *We didn't need no stinking safety gear!* We sat in the back of pick ups going down the highway at 70 mph and thought that was crazy cool! We felt special when our parents let us sit in their laps and steer the car. Airbags? What's an airbag????!!! Can you even imagine any of those situations happening today? It's amazing we made it through childhood!!!

Yes, the boomer generation is a unique generation in itself. We were raised by the Builder generation who believed in the values of work hard, work fast, duty to your country and sacrifice. They went through the depression, saw our country attacked, and went through World War II. They (builders) encouraged us (boomers) to express ourselves from an early age. Therefore, we were the key generation to fight for civil rights. The Boomers are the most successful, affluent generation in history. We set high standards for ourselves and expect to achieve them. We are project driven and goal oriented. We aim for a mark and have failed if we don't



hit it dead on. And during our journey, we had kids and families. And our kids have watched as we prospered and achieved our goals, yet divorce skyrocketed and families crumbled.

EchoBoomers are a product of this environment. They are used to having to deal with multiple families or have watched their friends have multiple families. We, as parents, tended to lavish material possessions on our children to make up for the lack of time spent with our kids. At the time, we felt like we were giving them all that we didn't have growing up.

This generation has responded by being independent, yet they are **relationally driven**. They have their own, individual ideas and ideals, but want to live them out with a group of friends. Even their choice of employment is influenced by their standard of community. Will they play a vital part of the team? Do they get to speak into the process? What is the chemistry with their coworkers? What is the bigger purpose of their work? What kind of global fingerprint is this company leaving?

We taught them to express themselves. We encouraged them to be whatever they wanted to be, and do whatever they wanted to do. We encouraged them to think independently. Bottom line, we raised them to be who they are today.

And though this next generation is definitely independent and suspicious of authority figures, there is an underlying need for adult interaction. The kind of adult that will encourage and exhort them.

The church is not exempt from the suspicions of this generation. Surveys taken by the Barna Group are showing alarming statistics regarding how the next generation is disengaging from the church.

*The most potent data regarding disengagement is that a majority of twentysomethings - 61% of today's young adults - had been church-ed at one point during their teen years but they are now spiritually disengaged (i.e., not actively attending church, reading the Bible, or praying). Only one-fifth of twentysomethings (20%) have maintained a level of spiritual activity consistent with their high school experiences. Another one-fifth of teens (19%) was never significantly reached by a Christian community of faith during their teens and has remained disconnected from the Christian faith.<sup>3</sup>*

So how do we re-engage this generation? How can God use us to help re-capture the hearts of this amazing generation?

Rex Miller of Relevant Magazine puts it like this ...

I hunger for life-changing, transformational insight, guidance and encouragement, and though that might be advertised on the label, I usually find that I get a package full of promises but can't seem to find the goods. The real goods, I've found, come in the form of faces and names—trusted relationships that turn the Word into flesh. And this is the Church's largest need, greatest opportunity and most pressing challenge: to deliver on the promise of transformation by finding and nurturing mentors.<sup>4</sup>

That's where you and I come in. We have the opportunity to impact this generation. We just have to discard the old wine skins that we've had for years, and start using the new ones that are more suitable for the next generation. We can do this! I know because I have witnessed it first hand.

There is a whole lot of statistical information in this section. But the truth is, sometimes it's better to hear from one who has been there and is experiencing this everyday.

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<sup>3</sup> Barna Group, Internet, September 11, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Rex Miller, Relevant Magazine, Internet

Cathi, a twentysomething herself, worked for a year studying the next generation. She did extensive research on the emergent church, post-modern movement and explored ways that the church could bridge the gap between the generations. Here is an extremely small overview of what she has learned about her generation as a whole.

## 5 Things Everyone Should Know about Our Generation

Every generation leaves a unique stamp on the world. The builders were a generation committed to hard work, family values, and a respect of authority. The boomers are a “me-driven” society, committed to individual progress, and the accumulation of material wealth.

While the next generation (be it X, Y, EchoBoomers, whatever) continues to be studied by everyone from marketers to sociologists, one thing has become quite clear; we hate to be labeled, stereotyped, or generalized. With that being said, there *are* a few important things you should know about us as a whole. So while I must beg the forgiveness of my peers for breaking it down in such “simple, general,” and perhaps controversial terms, here they are:

1. **We are independent.** We are a generation of latchkey kids, for the most part raising ourselves between the hours of 3:00 PM and 6:00PM. Many of us moved from house to house with a different set of rules with each set of parents and little stability. We learned to take care of ourselves and look out for our own best interests. We built strong, family-like relationships with our friends, confiding our deepest hurts and greatest joys with our peers instead of our parents. Involved in every after-school activity possible, time to connect with our parents was limited. Even at church (for those of us who went) we were separated from the adults and had an age-catered experience for each year of our spiritual journey.

So where does this leave us? Quite simply, longing for guidance, but resistant to direction. We don't want a mentor; we want a friend. Someone who will believe in us, encourage us, and be a sounding board for all of our random thoughts, questions, fears, hopes, and desires. I've heard this same principle described in regards to husbands and wives; women want to vent and emote while their husbands want to fix. Think of us as your wife (humor me). Lend a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, and trust that when we want your advice we will ask for it.

2. **We are highly connected.** Let's face it; technology has set a new standard in community. Cell phones, email, instant message- even cheap airfare has ensured that we are able to stay connected with anyone we choose at any time we choose. While in the past you may have had to wait until your 10 or 20-year reunions to catch up with your high school classmates, with services like MySpace and Facebook we can discover their marital status, mood for the day, what religion they practice, who their friends are, what music they listen to, and view endless albums of their pictures with just the click of a button. “Losing touch,” much like the home answering machine or handwritten letter, is a thing of the past.

So where does this leave us? With an expectation of availability. In a culture where “Boundaries” is such a buzz word, it's important that you don't communicate these boundaries as barriers. While the kind of accessibility technology affords appears to be surface level, my generation really wants access to *you*, and the deepest parts of you.

A while back I was facing a tough season of life. It seemed that everywhere around me marriages were falling apart, among my peers and my pastors alike. I was driving home late one Sunday night and got a call that another of my dearest friends had filed for divorce. She was 24 years old and I had been her maid of honor just 4 years earlier. I felt lost and confused and mostly alone. This institution in which I believed so strongly, seemed to be crumbling all around me. It was late, 11PM. With a hunch that she'd be awake I texted Connie's cell. Her response to my moment of crisis was availability. She told me to come over and we talked until 12:30, all about my fears and concerns, my disappointment in my friends and elders. She never told me I was being irrational, or that I had nothing to worry about. She assured

Builders:  
Born 1922 – 1945

Boomers:  
1946-1964

Busters:  
1964-1976

EchoBoomers:  
1977 – 1994

Millennials:  
1995 - Today

me that my fears were legitimate and that marriage was hard, but worth it. We talked about what it means to base a marriage on God's principles instead of the whims and waves of emotion. I didn't leave her house with all the answers on relationships or an overwhelming sense of contentment, but my fears seemed more manageable and the world less chaotic.

Availability doesn't mean abandoning your priorities; it just means fitting us into them. There have been plenty of times when she's kicked me out of her house because she's going to bed, or had to cut time with me short to spend time with her husband, kids, or friends (I mean...she *does* have a life!). But when it mattered, she was there.

3. **We are cause-conscious.** Perhaps because of the highly connected nature of our society, we are more aware of how our actions, purchases, and values affect others. Causes such as AIDS, poverty, environmentalism, animal rights, slave labor, fair trade, and sex trafficking pull at our heartstrings so deeply we are willing to change our purchasing habits, our eating habits, what coffee we drink, and what companies we support to display our commitment to what is right and just. Essentially, we long to be part of a cause that is bigger than ourselves, and there are plenty to choose from.

So where does this leave us? Primed to champion the cause of Christ. Don't question our idealism—show curiosity for our passion, and focus on the cause in common: the Kingdom. You may not understand us boycotting chocolate Easter eggs<sup>5</sup>, or making sure our shampoo is environmentally friendly and not tested on animals, but you do understand the cause of Christ. Rallying my generation around the Kingdom, reminding us of the ultimate cause, and the ultimate champion for justice and mercy is something we can be excited and passionate about together.

4. **We are multi-taskers.** It's a fast-paced world; who has the time to focus on just one task? My generation grew up doing homework in front of the television (without compromising the quality of our work), talking on the phone while driving and listening to the radio, checking email, browsing the internet, eating dinner, all while having an in-depth conversation with friends.

This multi-tasking generation is the perfect crowd for lifestyle mentoring. We have no problem diving into the deep stuff of life while cruising the mall or sitting at the park with you and your kids. If you'll listen, we'll talk. Going on a last minute errand? Call us. Spontaneous doesn't scare us, in fact we welcome it. If you keep us in mind, we will connect.

5. **We are naturally suspicious.** Wait. Before you roll your eyes, or wrinkle your nose, let me explain. In fact, no one I know has said it better than Sarah Cunningham in her book *Dear Church*. So I'll let her explain.

*...children of the sixties and seventies gained their political voice early. They became comfortable with expressing their ideals, singing and speaking freely about what they thought the world should be and about how they thought world powers should operate. Of course, they produced more than just some surviving records of Woodstock. Thanks to leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy, our parents overturned life as it was and ushered in a new era of equal rights.*

*The learnings of the sixties and seventies became our parent's platform for raising children. And so, they encouraged us to be free thinkers, telling us that we live in a free country where the draft could be challenged and no one had the right to tell us what to do with our lives.*

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<sup>5</sup> Most manufacturers of Easter chocolate employ child slave laborers

*We were given permission to question the status-quo...if not outright encouraged to do so. Not only were we **not** forced to accept social norms, but we were in some way groomed to be suspicious of them.*<sup>6</sup>

So where does this leave us? With a need for authenticity. Reality is no longer what's real; it's what's on TV. Political leaders and pastors are on the same playing field when it comes to infidelity and dishonesty. What people say, what they do or how they act is generally disjointed. We want to trust you, we really do. Be real with us. Just show us that you live what you believe, or at least that you're trying. You'll gain our respect and our confidence.

Most importantly, we do not want to be your project. Set the whole mentoring thing aside; do you like spending time with us? Do you enjoy our company? If it feels forced, we will notice. We're not looking for flattery or fake- in fact there's nothing that turns us off more. This relationship should feel natural, not like a blind date.

Scared yet? I hope not. My generation is longing to connect with you. We have so many things we want to ask you, so many things we want to share with you. All you have to do is show us you care!

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<sup>6</sup> Dear Church: Letters from a Disillusioned Generation; Sarah Cunningham: pg. 92)

## **Mentoring – It's Not What You Think!!!**

*1-6Your job is to speak out on the things that make for solid doctrine. Guide older men into lives of temperance, dignity, and wisdom, into healthy faith, love, and endurance. Guide older women into lives of reverence so they end up as neither gossips nor drunks, but models of goodness. By looking at them, the younger women will know how to love their husbands and children, be virtuous and pure, keep a good house, be good wives. We don't want anyone looking down on God's Message because of their behavior. Also, guide the young men to live disciplined lives. 7-8But mostly, show them all this by doing it yourself, incorruptible in your teaching, your words solid and sane. Then anyone who is dead set against us, when he finds nothing weird or misguided, might eventually come around.*

Titus 2:1-8 MSG

If you're expecting some amazing reference material or a detailed 'to do' list of mentoring moments, this is not it. This is a totally different way to view mentoring. No books or curriculum needed. It's not a bible study. It's women passing on life to other younger women. The only curriculum you need is your life experiences, what God has taught you through those experiences and what he is teaching you now!

Think about it ... How many Bible Studies have you attended in your life? How many church services have you attended? How many retreats? How many times has God spoken to you thru a personal time alone with Him? How many times have you read 'Bible Stories' to your kids? And what about the relationships God is using to teach you about Himself? i.e. your friends, your family, your kids, a person in trouble? Those are just a few conduits through which God has been teaching you. The point IS, we all know much more than we think ... and we all know way more than we are sharing.

Start viewing your life through a different lens. You must see your life as a mentoring tool, a source of information to share with others. God has taught you through circumstances, both good and bad. He wants to use those times as teaching points so others can see His work in you.

So change your lens in the area of HOW you teach. SHOW others Christ, don't just tell them about Him. Show them through your everyday situations and circumstances how to live a Christ-like life. Share with them the things Christ has taught you as you go throughout your day.

I got a call from a friend in Texas a few days ago. We started talking about mentoring ... (imagine that!) Her comment to me was, 'Oh no! I can't mentor. I need a book or something. I can't do that!' ...I tried to assure her that not only does she *not* need a book, but especially in the beginning, she definitely *shouldn't* use a book. She's already mentoring the tons of girls that are at her house 24/7. She just doesn't realize it! When they stand in the kitchen with her and make cookies, or she teaches them to make a cake from scratch.... she's mentoring them. Then during those fun times, a subject will come up and she'll tell them what God has taught her in her own life through similar circumstances. Or she'll share what the scriptures say on a subject ... that's mentoring! She just hasn't called it that!

You could very well be mentoring someone right now, but you don't see what you're doing as mentoring. I certainly didn't! And I still don't *tell* anyone that's what I'm doing!!!! But what I HAVE realized is that when the opportunity comes along, and I have the chance to invest in someone God puts in my path, I become more intentional. I become more aware of the times I can interject 'God moments' into our conversation. I become more focused on the circumstances and the urgency of our time together. I realize that God gives us those moments not to waste them, but to use them to glorify Him.

We have to start recognizing these moments as significant and be willing to open up and share ourselves with others when God gives us the opportunity!

*I never took a class on how to mentor someone, or attended a tea or even read a book about it. It just started when we hosted and led a high school Bible study at our house for teenagers. We loved having the teenagers hang out at our house and we tried to make them feel comfortable, welcomed and loved in our home. The home I grew up in was always warm and welcoming and my parents always had time for my friends and I grew up knowing that was how I wanted the home that I would create to be. I think the mentoring just grew out of that open home. Bible study was on Tuesdays nights but I soon found that kids were stopping by on the weekends and weekdays after school just to hang out, rummage through my pantry and mostly to have a hug or an encouraging talk.*

*I had a small group of girls that I led at the Bible study and it became very "normal" for them to visit me frequently. I loved on these girls for 4 years. Just because they graduated from high school didn't seem a good reason not to welcome them into my home and my life. Of course they all didn't come all the time, but a few became "regulars" at the dinner table and on the weekends just watching TV with the family, playing games with my kids or just "hanging" with me while I cooked dinner or did laundry. I know these don't sound like exciting things that young girls would want to observe, but oddly enough they loved the fact that I would listen while I worked, and that they felt like part of a family. Many of them had moms that worked or were not in the picture due to divorce or other issues so these girls just loved being around a "mom".*

*My kids loved having them there (especially as my sons grew older and the girls were always cute!) and my daughter would watch us interact. I knew I was planting seeds in her adolescence when she might not have been as interested in talking with me if she hadn't seen other high school and now college girls do it so freely. It became normal for me to do the weekly grocery shopping with extra teenagers or college kids along. I think they even picked up little lessons as I talked through what I was going to cook or how expensive things were and how you had to make choices in life about little and big things. Every day events became opportunities for conversations about raising children, finding a Godly man or how to treat your family members. There were many days that we walked through the grocery store or mall wiping tears as they opened up and shared secrets and stories that would never have come out in a small group Bible study setting in front of other people. The intimacy of sharing life together made these moments possible and comfortable for all of us.*

*Now as these girls enter adulthood, some marrying and starting to consider families of their own, I look back at those moments of life we shared together, just walking through the every day issues of living in community, raising a family and serving God and I am so thankful for the chance to speak into the lives of these girls in ways that were so natural, so easy and so fun!*

*Kathleen Hamer  
Portola Hills, CA*

### **Get Over Yourself! ... In a Good Way!**

**Romans 6:15-18 MSG** -- 15-18 So, since we're out from under the old tyranny, does that mean we can live any old way we want? Since we're free in the freedom of God, can we do anything that comes to mind? Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in His freedom!

Freedom in Christ. What does that mean? Is that even attainable? I've heard that term my whole life and it's always seemed a little ominous to me. What IS freedom in Christ....really?

#### **Freedom from the past ...**

Not too long ago, my husband was consulting with a church in Vail, CO. We were on one of our 3 week consulting excursions so we had luggage spread out everywhere. We were going to West Palm Beach, Florida after this so we had everything from bathing suits to parkas packed. We had 4 large bags that we brought with us from California to Vail along with 2 carry-ons each with computer paraphernalia to boot ... literally! So there was baggage everywhere I looked. The image of Lance carrying all of this baggage down stairs into our room and taking over our surroundings is what started the wheels turning.

It was one of those days where the snow was coming down outside and the fire was blazing. It was about 11:00 a.m. and I was still in my pajamas (it was a pajama type day!) As I looked around, it became so clear to me. *The biggest reason mentoring is so difficult is because of the baggage that we've been carrying and continue to carry with us where ever we go.* Baggage of what we think we should be vs. what we are.

Out of the blue (or the heavens!) came the thought ... **freedom in Christ!** God wants us to be free to be who we are. And with Him living in us, we ARE 'free in Christ' ! It was so crystal clear!

Dictionary.com gives the following definition of freedom:

**freedom** -- *the right to enjoy all the privileges or special rights of citizenship, membership, etc., in a community or the like.*

We have access to the Father. We are a member of His family! We have the right to all the privileges He offers. But we limit ourselves in how we use these privileges because of the baggage we're carrying with us. We all want to walk in freedom, but we keep dragging heavy, cumbersome baggage with us everywhere we go.

5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8For if you possess these qualities in *increasing measure*<sup>7</sup>, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:5-8 NIV

The Scripture above says in verse 8, '...if you possess these qualities in **increasing measure** they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive... Let's face it. We are who we are. God made us that way. But as long as we are striving to be more like Christ, wants to and is going to use us.

12-14'I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all

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<sup>7</sup> Emphasis mine



*of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.*

*Phillipians 3:12-14 MSG*

We don't have to have it all together before we start making a difference for the kingdom!

God wants to use us, just as we are, right where we are. He wants to use us with our short comings and our achievements. It doesn't matter if we are rich or poor, born in the country or in the city, our color or shape. It doesn't matter what personality, geographic location or financial status we have. Because He is in us, and we are doing all we can to **increase in measure** or be like Him, we have *freedom!* No judgment. No scrutiny. Just grace!

What does that have to do with mentoring? We are free to be who God made us to be so that we can share what HE has taught us with others. Those who God puts in YOUR life are not at all who God will put in MY life. I wouldn't be able to touch the lives of the people that you will be able to touch!!!! That's why we all have our different journeys....our different backgrounds and histories. So we can impact those God puts in our path and share our journey with them.

### **Freedom for the future ...**

A light came on in my head in that Colorado basement and I realized that God wants to use me no matter where I am in the journey. He wants to use all of me, not just the parts that most closely resemble Him. He wants to use the good, the bad and the ugly parts. He wants to use the parts people see and the parts people haven't seen. He wants to use ALL of those parts to help someone else on THEIR journey.

Let's get real honest here. What kind of people do you like being around more: those who are transparent, honest and are a little rough around the edges? Or someone who has it all together, the perfect family and knows the answer to any and all questions thrown her way? For me, it's the first kind of person. I like to know that I'm not the only one that doesn't have it all together. I like to know that just because I say 'crap!' or my husband and I fight doesn't mean I'm backsliding or 'sinful'. I'm not saying woman #2 IS saying that.... I'm just saying that sometimes I find myself feeling unworthy, less of a person or even less of a Christian because I AM struggling with those things.

So let's not compare. Let's just agree to get better. You talk about **FREEDOM!** This is a great way to look at the future. I don't have to be like someone else, I **SHOULDN'T** be like someone else. I need to be who God made ME! I need to be willing for Him to use me with all my rough edges exposed. I need to allow Him to smooth those edges. But in the process, be available and willing for Him to work or speak through me!

We all want to be better ... in every aspect of life. And as we get better, let's just choose to take someone along with us to see how we live life. To see us as we screw up, and as we succeed. To watch us as we continue to move forward knowing we aren't perfect and we don't have it all together ... But at least we know it, admit it, embrace it and are acting on it! We're intentionally looking toward Christ to improve our walk with Him. That's freedom!!! Freedom to go forward without fear, because He knows our heart! We want to be like Him! We want to walk closer to Him!

### **Freedom in the now ...**

He wants to use us. He wants to use who we are today. What we are today. How we are ... TODAY!

What does that mean specifically? It means he wants to use our experiences ...Our successes ...Our failures ...Our loves ... Our hurts ... Our life!!

He wants you to share your story. Sharing your experience and your story with younger women is the key to relationship. Throughout the Bible, God instructed people to tell stories to their children

As your kids get older, they are going to ask you straight, pointed questions. 'Why should I believe what you believe? How do you know it's the word of God? What makes you so sure?' The answer is not, 'because I said so' or even 'because the Bible says so!' Don't get me wrong. The Bible is crucial to our belief system and is our guide, the inerrant word of God. But your answer is in the stories, the experiences you've had that have proven Christ real in your life.

The same goes for the 20something generation. They are a skeptical bunch. They aren't going to believe just because you tell them to or because 'it's the right thing!'. They will believe because they love and trust *you*, and they see it lived out in your life. They will believe because they've heard it in the stories you've told them of Christ's faithfulness in your life. They will believe because they continue to see Christ working in and through you before their eyes.

***Free to be me!***

But they will only see Christ if you let them get close enough to see who you really are. Why is this so hard? Because we have come to believe and accept things that are just not true. You've got to embrace the freedom Christ has offered you to be you! To embrace this freedom, you must quit believing the lies that the enemy wants you to believe. I call these lies the ***Myths of Mentoring***.

### **Myths of Mentoring ...**

**I must be smart** – No ... you must be willing to share what you already know. God has taught you tons of stuff along your journey. That is what you must be willing to share with who ever God puts in YOUR path. So what if you don't have an IQ of 180! To be honest, most of the world wouldn't be able to connect with you if you did!!!!

God created *you as you* so you can use your story to touch the lives of those that God connects you with. You just have to be ready and willing to see and seize the opportunity.

**It's very time consuming** – No ... you must be willing to open up your life and allow someone to come along with you. You've got to start seeing your life and your daily schedule as an avenue to build relationships. I've learned that nobody has time to actually mentor. I'm sure that is an overstatement, but generally true! To think that I have to add one more meeting to my schedule is just too much to handle, so therefore I don't!!!!

Here's the thing ... you don't have to! The way to think about mentoring the next generation is to show them, not tell them. They want to see Jesus in your life. They want to see you walk the walk, not just talk the talk. So... take them along with you. Take them through life with you!

This does 2 things You can get accomplished what needs to be done in your world AND it satisfies the curiosity of the 20something to find out if your words match up to your life

When I started doing this years ago, I didn't think I was making a difference in the lives of young women. I certainly didn't think I was mentoring! I just thought I was hanging out with them and enjoying their company. But what I realized was that I was *showing* them Christ in my life and in my everyday world. They would go to the grocery store with me, or to the mall. They would travel with me to the airport or to an event. I asked them to go with me to church events or to family gatherings. I had them in my home while I was cooking supper and then had them join us for dinner.

What did this show her? It showed her ALL of me. The good, bad and ugly!!! It showed her how I responded when the clerk in the grocery store gave me the wrong change. It showed her how I responded when the guy that was in way too big a hurry cut me off at the mall! As we walked in the park, a woman came to me in tears and we all prayed together on the spot. She helped me cook dinner and laughed with us at the dinner table. She also saw me when my response was NOT like Christ. She listened when I talked to her about my anger ... and then I apologized to her because it wasn't the right way to respond. And then we talked about what the right response should have been.

*My relationship with Loisa evolved all on its own. In the midst of the day to day is where we do life together....in the midst of dishes, laundry, and children a friendship was formed that I will treasure for the rest of my life. I have never really thought of myself as a mentor to her, but I guess, in a way, I am. It's funny, looking back over the course of our relationship, I have wondered many times if I have gained more from it than she has. By listening to her heart time and time again, I became the student of a generation I knew very little about, and built a friendship with an amazing lady. I really did have something to offer, not by appearing to have it all together, but by opening my heart and my home, with all its imperfections and struggles.*

Mary Beth Adams  
Kansas City, Kansas

Basically, we think this is just everyday life ... and it is. But when we live it with intentionality, we are mentoring ... we just hate calling it that!!!!

**Younger girls don't want to hang out with me!** Total untruth!!!! Because of the way this generation was raised and the pattern of the previous generation, there is a longing to have the influence of an older woman in their life. There are so many young women who have little or no relationship with their mom ... or even if

they have a GREAT relationship with their mom, a lot of the time they aren't living in the same city or even state that their mom lives in.

*I didn't know when I met Mary Beth that the relationship we would come to have would affect me so deeply. There has never been a day that we decided she was my mentor...it was never an assignment or a responsibility. In other words, she was never required to like me. Instead, I've realized as we have gone through life together that she loves me. I'm single and at that twenty-something stage of life where it feels like the world expects me to have everything figured out. I expect it of myself, too. But she doesn't expect it of me. She doesn't have it all figured out either. Instead, as life happens, we take it on together. I never hesitate to call her when the world seems to fall apart. She never hesitates to assure me nothing has fallen apart...that it's just my perspective for the moment. I couldn't ask for more than that. At 25 when life is so up in the air, nothing does more good in my heart than having her tell me I'm alright. I can't express it really...what it means to have someone smile when they see me, hold me when I weep, tell me not to take myself so seriously, look me in the eyes and tell me I'm okay when I don't feel okay. Mary Beth loves me when she doesn't have to. That kind of love changes a person. And I will never be the same.*

*Loisa Wright  
Mission Viejo, CA*

I recently had this conversation with one of the girls I hang out with on a regular basis. She has an amazing, spirit-filled mom, who loves and supports her completely. She lives in the same town as her mom and is very, very close to her. She made this enlightening comment to me. "I love my mom and I have no doubt that she loves me and has my best in mind. But she HAS to love me ... she's my mom! You CHOOSE to love me. There's a difference".

WOW!!!! Out of the mouth of babes!!! There IS a difference when someone chooses to love you. There is nothing comparable to a mother's love, don't misunderstand me! But it is something special when someone who is older and wiser chooses to come along side you, invest in you and love you unconditionally.

**I need to know the Bible better** – NO, you need to be willing and ready to share what you already have learned. Yes, we all need to continue growing and learning. Absolutely! But to decide not to invest in the next generation because we aren't Billy Graham isn't really acceptable! Think about it ... Do you know the Bible better now than you did last year? What about now compared to 2 years ago? Or 5 years ago? If you've attended one or 2 church services, the answer should be yes! Absolutely!!! So share what you know!!!! God has taught you more than you think. We tend to focus on what we don't know more than what we DO know.

A few years ago, we tried to talk my parents into buying a computer. They were in their 60's at the time. There was no way they were going to buy one. Computers were too complex, too complicated, too scary! But they finally succumbed to the ongoing pressure we were dealing out. Once they got one, they started playing around on it. They realized that they knew enough to get started. And once they started, my dad got so excited about the possibilities, that he drove into Austin multiple times for advanced software lessons. The transformation in my parents from absolutely being opposed to owning a computer to not being able to function WITHOUT one, happened within a relatively short period of time. And was awesome to watch!

Here's the point. *They knew enough to get started, they tried, the fear went away.* AND they continued to learn along the way. They use it daily and they'll never go back!

Bottom line --- we don't need to know everything about the bible before we start sharing it with someone else. I know that's an amazing concept!!!! Deep, huh!!! But we all have these thoughts! We think we have to be smarter, wiser, deeper, AND have all of the spiritual gifts and disciplines active and vibrant in our lives before we can start investing in someone else. WRONG!!! Start now! God wants to use you just where you are!!! He'll teach you along the way!!!!

**I don't have any curriculum** - Your life IS your curriculum. Earlier I mentioned that God wants to use 'your experiences ...your successes ...your failures ...your hurts ... your life!! We cover this in depth in the tools section of this guide. But let me assure you, you have plenty of material to use to impact the life of someone else!

**I don't have anything to offer** -- You have everything to offer! You have your time, your love, your laughter, your skills, your experience, your knowledge, your hugs, your tears ... **you!**

Isn't it so typical what Satan puts in our head? I'm not good enough. I don't have anything to offer. I'm not smart enough. 'as soon as I memorize 27 verses of scripture and read the whole new testament, fast for 40 days and attend 18 bible studies ....THEN I'll start mentoring someone!

No! All of those thoughts are just a smokescreen to get you to put off what God wants you to be doing now ... everyday! The thought that we don't have anything to offer is purely from Satan himself. He doesn't necessarily want you to think you're worthless; He just wants to convince you to WAIT. Don't act now because of ... whatever! It doesn't matter what ... *just wait!*

Mentoring is a lifestyle, not a program. It is basically taking the relationships God has put in your life, recognizing the God moments, and intentionally sharing what God has taught you in those moments and circumstances.

So don't believe the Myths. God never asks more of us than we can give. He asks us to give what we have... Nothing more. Nothing less. We just have to be willing to act on the moments that He puts in front of us. We must show what we know. And we must be ready and willing to share what He has done in our lives.

### Change Your Lens

A few years ago (I won't say how many!) I turned 45. I found myself squinting at my computer and realized, "Oh my soul! I think I need some help here!" So I went to the local drug store and bought some reading glasses. About a week later, my husband and I were having a Bible study in our home and when I opened my Bible I realized I couldn't even make out the words on the page. (Evidently the words must have shrunk!) I remembered the reading glasses. I put on the specs, looked at the page and, low and behold... I COULD SEE!!! Hallelujah!

Here's the point ...

***The things that were right in front of me became clear when I was wearing the right lens.***

In the same way that those glasses allowed me to see the words in my Bible and on my computer screen, changing your lens on life can help you to see the young women God has put or is putting in your path.

*When I started seeing 20somethings through a different lens it was like becoming more aware of my surroundings. Kind of like when you buy a new car, you suddenly notice that model of car everywhere you go. Once I changed my lens there were so many opportunities to become friends with and minister to these young women. The check out girl at my supermarket, the girl at the coffee shop- the opportunity for ministry was all around me! It's been a true blessing in my life to have these relationships.*

*Kim Gore  
Ladera Ranch, CA*

### Where Are They?

So where can you find these next generation women? They're all around you! The babysitter, your best friend's daughter, the new college grad at work, a young mother who frequents the park where your kids play... Up to now, these young women have remained in your peripheral vision; noticed, appreciated, maybe even spoken to, but only as casual acquaintances. Change your lens. How could they benefit from a deeper relationship with you? What can you do to take a step in building a more meaningful relationship?

- Treat your babysitter to a special "Thank You" lunch, or coffee (in addition to her regular fee☺). Take some time to get to know her. Ask her what's going on in her life. Does she have another job? Is she in school?
- Does your friend's daughter seem to gravitate towards you? Have you had a significant conversation with her in the past? Go out to coffee. Offer to help her decorate her apartment or house. Find out what she's interested in and make a point to ask her about it; you could find you're interested too!
- Offer some help to your newest colleague. Give her some tips about the ins and outs of the office, and then invite her to lunch.
- Strike up a conversation with the woman at the park. Ask her about her kids and family. Set up a play date for your kids next week.
- Is there a young woman in your class at the gym that you always work out next to? Invite her for a smoothie after your workout.
- Do you know the name of the barista at your local coffee joint? Always be sure to ask how she is, and if she doesn't say "fine" or "good" take the time to follow up. (Don't forget to leave her a tip- she'll remember you!)
- You can also consider getting involved in a ministry at your church that naturally attracts 20somethings. You can volunteer with MOPS, lead a small group for the College & Career ministry, teach a Bible study for newlyweds with your spouse, or go on a mission trip and keep your eye out for a young woman to connect with.
- Does the task seem too big to tackle alone? Get some friends to join in. Together you can plan events to invite 20something women to attend(announce it in your church's bulletin or at college ministry). Host a small cooking class at your home. You can all work together to make dinner and then sit down to a wonderful meal together.

What kind of skill do you have that you could pass on to a group of these young women? Maybe you're great at organization? Or perhaps you are the cooking queen...Do you like to walk dogs or are you an athlete? Whatever it is, I'd be willing to bet that there is a group of 20something women who would *love* to learn from you.

Above all else, the best tool at your disposal is prayer. Pray that God would open your eyes to the women walking in your path every day. And if there are no women in sight, pray and ask God to bring someone. He will be faithful to honor your request.

When I reflect on my life, I see that God has been putting young women and girls in my path all along. As my husband and I moved from church to church through Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, and California, there were always young women that I hung out with. I never saw myself as their mentor, but as a friend. I see now, that through those friendships I was helping to disciple them. The stories I shared with them and the things they witnessed God doing in my life were helping them to grow in their own relationship with the Lord.

Looking back, I *wish* I had seen those moments through the lens of mentoring. I would have been more intentional to share "God moments", I would have been more intentional when pointing them to Scripture for answers, I would have been bolder when it came to stepping in at crucial times.

Remember, mentoring begins with friendship and is followed by spiritual investment. Like every good relationship, this one will take time to build trust. Stop looking for a ministry project and start looking for an honest, authentic relationship... one from which both of you will learn and benefit!

Look around, take a risk, make the leap, and invite someone to walk with *you* today.

### Moments, Seasons, Lifetime

I've learned that there are 3 three different opportunities God gives us to mentor;; in the moments, for a season, and for a lifetime. Every relationship begins with a moment, and for some, that's where it ends. But given some intentional time and energy that moment can blossom into a meaningful relationship. As you begin to change your lens, you'll start to see every interaction as an opportunity.

#### **Mentoring In The Moments:**

True, today the greeting "How are you?" is more a courtesy than an inquiry into the state of someone's well-being, but that one question can open a lot of doors for mentoring moments. Again, it requires a change of lens to see that mentoring does not have to have a long-term commitment to have an impact. But you must be willing to take the extra few minutes to act on the opportunity God puts in front of you. So what does it look like to mentor in the moments?

A few months ago I was trying on some clothes in Target. As I entered the dressing room, I saw a young woman standing in front of the floor length mirror in the hallway, turning from left to right, tilting her head, looking over her shoulder attempting to view her outfit from every possible angle. I could see from the way she was analyzing her attire and practicing different looks in the mirror that this outfit was for something special.

"Those jeans look great on you," I said, in an aim to ease her anxiety just a bit.

"Really?" she questioned. "They're not too tight?"

From there I helped her explore some ensemble options from the clothes she'd brought in to try on. She told me about the young man she was going to see that night, how it was their first date and she'd had a crush on him "like, forever" and how she wanted to pick an outfit that was cute and flirty without being too suggestive. We found the perfect one! When she left she thanked me profusely for my "help" and seemed to be more excited than nervous.

Now I don't know this girl, I never even found out her name. I don't know if she's a Christian or if she goes to church. I'll probably never see her again, but in that moment I saw an opportunity to act in love and I took advantage of it.

*"So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind."*

*1 Thessalonians 5:11 Message*

It was just a moment, seemingly insignificant, but in that moment I was able to communicate Christ's love to a young girl. A girl who was in need of it. In need of encouragement, confidence and a reminder of her beauty. I saw that need and I attempted to meet it, scary as it was to put myself out there like that. Walking away that day, I realized that I left just as encouraged as she did.

Opportunities to communicate God's love and truth will be revealed to you if you ask Him to open your eyes to them. Whether it's with a girl you see everyday at the gym, a waitress at a restaurant you frequent, a check-out girl at the grocery store, someone who takes the same route on the bus or train during your morning commute, or even someone in the next dressing room. Don't waste a chance to connect with someone. You never know who may need just a little encouragement ... and God can use *you* to make that happen!!!



## Mentoring For A Season:

Then there are times when God puts someone in your life for a little longer period of time ... for a season. Maybe college is out for the summer and a young girl starts working in your office for the summer. Or maybe a newlywed joined your Bible Study for the semester. Your kids are out of school and you meet a young lady at the park that you've never noticed before. These events may all have a limited time table, but it also may be a time that God has purposefully put you in the position to be this young woman's friend.

*Without really recognizing my new friend, being 20+ years younger than me, we started enjoying spending time together. It started as a casual acquaintance, but before I knew it, she was seeking me out. I realized God had planted her in my life and me in hers for a reason.*

*Mentor sounds like such a big status name but I guess that's what I am to her... I have walked where she hasn't yet walked, I have lived a life as a wife and mother that she hasn't yet lived.*

*Lindsey spends time with my family, as if she is one of us. One of my favorite memories with Lindsey is having her over to my home and teaching her how to make coconut cream pies. We had so much fun!*

*She went to college and I wasn't able to see her as much. But while she was there we emailed and called to keep in touch. When she came home to visit, she always let me know she was in town so we could connect. She has actually moved back from College and will be attending school locally now, so I am looking forward to many days ahead of walking beside her as God leads both of us in life. Not only am I excited to see how God will work through me to help Lindsey, but I am also thrilled to see how God will work through Lindsey to speak to me. I pray our walk together will honor the Lord.*

*Sharla Ward  
Amarillo, TX*

Sometimes we think that mentoring has to be this long, ongoing relationship, and sometimes it is. But sometimes, people enter our lives for short periods of time. Those short, seemingly insignificant connections could, very possibly, highly impact that young woman's life.

Once you've started seeing the people God puts in your path differently, you will see the opportunities He puts in front of you. We won't know the length of time we're suppose to be 'something' to those people. We just need to be obedient and intentional in the moment and let God do the rest!

When I think of mentoring in the seasons of my life, personally, I think of 2 different events that happened concurrently. It was our first pastorate in Danville, Arkansas... population 813. (Yes, that was the whole town.) So let me set the scene. Lance and I had been married 5 years and just finished seminary at Criswell Seminary in Dallas. We moved from Dallas, Texas (big city) to Danville, Arkansas (total country) on 5 acres of land behind the church. That 5 acres was surrounded by chicken farms. Living on acreage vs. living in a neighborhood is very different. Isolation is ever present. I didn't know a soul except the people at the church, and I didn't really know them... yet. My family lived 12 hours away in south Texas. Our church ran about 50 people. I was pregnant with Jonathan, my first born. So basically I was totally clueless about everything from being a pastor's wife at our first church, country life, motherhood, and dealing with isolation ... it was quite a change to say the least.

During those 6 years, 2 women took me under their wing, Sandra Moudy and Doris Majors. Sandra had kids that ranged in age from 4-8 years old. She immediately befriended me. We hung out at her house all of the time and she helped me through the 'baby' times. She showed me where shopping centers were and where to find the best deals on baby clothes. She helped me with discipline issues. I watched her with her kids. She loved them desperately, but was firm and consistent with them. She loved her husband and he loved her. She let me see the times when she was frustrated with him. She let me know how they resolved their conflict. It was an amazing and needed time of learning for me as a new mom and young wife.

Then there was Doris. She was a little farther down the path than Sandy. She was more of a grandma to my son, Jonathan. But what I remember about our relationship, was she was always teaching me something. She taught me how to can pickles and to bake bread. She was always 'putting up' something which I figured out meant canning something. She was a true Proverbs 31 woman. She was always busy. She was working with her husband in their business, or she was working in her garden, or in her kitchen. She always had time for me when I would call her up with a canning question or she would say, 'Why don't you just come over and I'll show you?' WOW! I loved that!

But what both of these women probably don't realize is the spiritual influence they had on me. They both truly lived out their faith daily. Both Sandy and Doris loved the Lord and it showed up in the everyday things they did. And as I walked with them through everyday life, I saw Jesus in their life. They shared stories of what Christ had done in their lives. I watched them as they'd look up the scripture that had touched them that day and read it to me. They were Jesus with skin on for a season of time... a crucial season of life for me!

At the same time Sandy and Doris were mentoring me, God put Debbie in my life. I was only 25 at the time and she was in high school. She started going to our church and we struck up a friendship. She would drop by the house and help me with Jonathan (my newborn at the time). She helped me fold clothes and cook supper. But during the years we were in Arkansas, Debbie had some tragic things happen in her life and she turned to us for answers. The answers she wanted, we couldn't give her. We didn't give her the cliché answers that come so easily. 'Everything happens for the good', 'God's timing is perfect', 'We don't see what He sees' 'They're in a better place'. No! We loved and supported her through these times. We cried with her and held her when she needed someone. We tried to help her family when they were hurting. Our words were basically meaningless during those times, but our actions were priceless.

I haven't talked to or seen any of these women for years, but they were all instrumental early on in my life. I don't think any of us would have thought that what we were doing was mentoring. But I can say, without a doubt ... it was! They all helped me see how mentoring at the most elementary level, can be so deeply effective.

Maybe we're suppose to be just an encouragement in the moment, or maybe we're suppose to be a friend for a season. We don't know how long the season will be for, the point is to be obedient. Be who God wants you to be for however long He wants you to be. The young woman you see may only be in your life for a few weeks, months, or maybe a year, but what rubs off on her in that time period may be life changing. You may be the first authentic Christian she's ever met. You may be the first person who's had a meaningful conversation with her since she's moved there. Or maybe she's just having a tough time in general and has no one to process with. When you make yourself available to listen, hear and give personal, God honoring advice, you are being Jesus with skin on.

*"He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God is there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of his healing comfort- we get a full measure of that, too."*

2 Corinthians 1: 3-5 MSG

Think of all the experiences you've had in your life: the good and the bad. Did you go to college, get married, have children, move to a new town, or begin a new job? Did you battle depression, battle an illness, get into debt, lose a parent, a friend, or a child, lose a job, struggle with infertility, go through a breakup or get divorced? Women in their twenties are facing similar things, and hearing your story, how you got through it, hearing what God taught you through it and continues to teach you can help them. Just having your support can be a tremendous help to them. Whether you handled these seasons with grace or made some royal mistakes, you have something of value to share with the next generation.

### **Mentoring For A Lifetime:**

Let me start by saying that lifetime mentoring relationships are few and far between... even rare. But when you take the time to recognize and cultivate them, they are invaluable ... for her AND you!

Cathi is one of these relationships in my life. We don't meet every week or go through studies together. But we have a long-term relationship that is ongoing..

In the 7 some-odd years that I've known Cathi, she has watched me go through all sorts of seasons and events- a lifetime's worth, in fact. She's been alongside me through some of life's most pivotal moments. She was there when my daughter graduated high school, and when my son moved out, and for both of their weddings. She watched and prayed with my husband and me as we made life-changing decisions regarding work and ministry. She's seen the whole gamut of my emotions; my best and my worst. She's seen me make choices in the flesh and when I've set myself in the center of God's will. Together we've belly laughed and had difficult discussions, some resulting in tears.

Just like any relationship, ours has changed and evolved over time. She's grown in her confidence and ability to make wise choices on her own. While she doesn't run everything by me, I know that our relationship is helping her to make these decisions. When I listen to Cathi talk, there are phrases she uses and things she says that I know she has picked up from listening to and walking with me. I know she sees marriage and family differently because she has watched my marriage and my family. I know she sees ministry differently because of what she's seen in our lives. I've seen God work in her life as she's seen Him work in *my* life. But she never would have seen Him in my life if I hadn't *let her* into my life. As we've walked together she's seen that my relationship with Christ is real, not just words or a Sunday morning outing.

Mentoring for a lifetime means simply making your life available.

It means intentionally investing enough time in and with someone that it shapes her for a lifetime. Allowing someone to observe and even participate in the ins and outs of marriage, parenting, and career, and coupling that with a knowledge of God to ensure that they have the wisdom and experience to make wise choices in their own life, *whether you're with them or not*. I believe that Cathi and I will be in each other's lives for the long haul, but if that were to change, I'm confident that she's seen enough of my life to carry her through whatever comes her way.

Mentoring is not a commitment to a length of time; it's a commitment to a way of life. So if someone comes into your life for a moment, seize that moment. If someone comes into your life for a season, relish that time, and if God blesses you with a lifelong friend and companion, dive in and open your life to her. You won't be sorry you did!

*I don't think anybody ever told me I was going to be Ryanne's mentor. There was no official start to our relationship. It started off and continues to be very casual. She was a student in our youth ministry and I was an adult leader. Truth is I liked her and wanted to spend more time with her. She was fun, energetic and well...a freshman in high school. She and her friends reminded me of what I was like in high school.*

*As time passed our relationship grew and we began to invite each other into the events of our personal lives. Some were very exciting like her senior prom; others were just everyday life, like shopping at Target for home decorations for my new house. We just began "to do life" with one another. I told her about what was happening in my life and would ask her what was happening in her life. I made an effort to celebrate the moments in her life that I remembered marked who I was and had become. Things like getting her driver's license, going away to college, birthdays, boyfriends...all the things that life revolves around when you are young. In the midst of these moments I would look for ways and find opportunities to encourage and challenge her faith.*

*As the years passed my life was changing; I was getting married, having babies, God was at work in my life in big and little ways and through it all, I would share with Ryanne what I was learning. I would share what was hard (maybe because of mistakes from my past) and what was rewarding because of some good habits and boundaries I had put in place. All of this was modeling my faith and spiritual journey to Ryanne and little did I know it was shaping her as well.*

*Last year Ryanne got married and I had the privilege of being her Matron of Honor. As I was thinking about the significant role she was allowing me to play in her wedding, I couldn't help but think of the significant role she had been playing in my life. She had become like a little sister to me, someone whom I loved very much, someone who I wanted to protect, someone who I wanted to encourage, spend time with, journey with and experience life and faith with. Ryanne and I have become more than friends, she is part of my family and hopefully will be part of my life forever.*

Jana Sarti  
Foothill Ranch, CA

The young woman Jana was investing in is now my daughter-in-law. Was Jana's investment valuable? I would say, absolutely!

*I wasn't looking for someone to pour into my life. It just happened. Jana was someone I had crossed paths with that was a little bit older and showed interest in my life and decisions. She never told me how to make a decision, but she always shared with me what life lessons she had learned. The most important thing was that she chose to "do life" with me. She chose to let me in the ins and outs of her everyday life. It started with us going out to lunch, and soon we were spending all kinds of time together. Usually whatever we were doing wasn't super exciting...walking down the aisles at the grocery store, driving to the airport to pick up a friend of hers...but it was always filled with great conversations and lots of laughter. Soon it seemed like we made memories no matter what we were doing. We could be sitting on the couch watching TV or going on a road trip but either way we were together!*

*Sometimes Jana had to speak truth into my life that I didn't want to hear or that hurt my feelings, but it always came down to her having a similar experience and wanting to save me from making any unnecessary mistakes. Even though it may not have happened in that exact moment, there was always forgiveness and explanation – and our bond became stronger!*

*Then out of the blue I had an "ah ha" moment where I realized after many years of friendship and mentorship Jana had become my family. The funny thing is it had seemed like it was always that way, and I wasn't sure if it had ever been any different. Nowadays we are on much more of a friend level, but Jana has played many roles in my life: mentor, big sister, boss, and landlord! I am still learning from Jana everyday. She is still allowing me to peer into her life as she is a wife, a mom, a daughter, an aunt, and a strong Christian woman! And last year, just as I had taken a part in her wedding – I made sure the day that I said "I do" she was standing right next to me as my Matron of Honor (even if she was nine months pregnant!). It is so exciting to be able to be in a new chapter of my life knowing that Jana is looking out for me, praying for me, and loving on me and my husband whenever she can. I can't imagine "doing life" with out her!*

*Ryanne Witt  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA*

The bottom line is this ... Be aware of those God puts in your life ... and He WILL send someone into your life, If it just for a moment, seize that moment. If it is for a season, recognize the opportunity and relish that time. And if God blesses you with a lifelong friend and companion, dive in and open your life to her. You won't be sorry you did!

## Why? The Bible Tells Me So!

So, why is *lifestyle mentoring* the mentoring model for the next generation? First, it is the model that the next generation will respond to. Relationship vs. Program. But 2ndly, and more importantly, because throughout all of Scripture this model is exhibited. From Moses to Joshua, Paul to Timothy, and most importantly from Jesus to his followers; the older generations pass along the stories of God's love, His Word, and His faithfulness to the younger generations. It is not only modeled, but commanded.

And in Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 20-24 (MSG)

*“Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only! Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night. Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates...*

*The next time your child asks you, "What do these requirements and regulations and rules that GOD, our God, has commanded mean?" tell your child, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and GOD powerfully intervened and got us out of that country. We stood there and watched as GOD delivered miracle-signs, great wonders, and evil-visitations on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his household. He pulled us out of there so he could bring us here and give us the land he so solemnly promised to our ancestors. That's why GOD commanded us to follow all these rules, so that we would live reverently before GOD, our God, as he gives us this good life, keeping us alive for a long time to come."*

Let's take a deeper look at this:

*“Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only! Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children.”*

As Israel is being established as a nation (a pivotal point in God's story) God gives them this command. He does not reserve it for Moses on top of Mt. Sinai, or for Aaron and those in the priesthood (the pastors and leaders of the church so to speak). No, God addresses the nation of Israel, ALL who had seen His mighty works in freeing them from Egypt. The tent makers, the mothers, the carpenters, the shepherds-ALL who had partaken in His goodness in the desert. They all had a story to tell, just as you have a story to tell of God's goodness in your life.

*“Talk about them **wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night.** Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.”*

From the time you wake until you fall asleep at night your life is a testimony to Christ's work. As you drive to Costco, when you're playing with your kids, eating dinner with your family; all of these times are opportunities to pass along your faith experience with someone. Perhaps that someone wasn't blessed to grow up in a Christian home, or maybe they just need a new perspective on God and the Christian life. *Wherever you are*, whatever you are doing, the opportunity is there for 'God moments' to happen. You just have to recognize them and be ready to respond in those moments.

*“...tell your child, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and GOD powerfully intervened and got us out of that country. We stood there and watched as GOD delivered miracle-signs, great wonders, and evil-visitations on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his household. He pulled us out of there so he could bring us here and give us the land he so solemnly promised to our ancestors. That's why GOD commanded us to follow*

*all these rules, so that we would live reverently before GOD, our God, as he gives us this good life, keeping us alive for a long time to come."*

Don't wait for Sunday morning, don't rely on a Bible study, no need to wait for the DVD curriculum, or enroll in seminary. Your greatest teaching tool is your life, your story of God's salvation. What better evidence do we have? What stronger testimony to His commandments than when we are obedient and we experience his goodness? Or when we are disobedient and we experience his grace and forgiveness? Don't underestimate the work that God has done in your life, or the power of your story. The women you mentor will feel closer to you *and* closer to the Lord as a result of you passing it on. They will believe because they've seen Christ in you. They will believe because they've heard the stories you've told them of Christ's faithfulness in your life. They will believe because they continue to see Christ working in and through you as they walk with you through life.

### **Jesus Mentored in the Moments**

Now, consider the ministry of Jesus. He took the time to mentor in the moments, the seasons, and the lifetimes. He never seemed to be too busy to 'notice' a person or the need of a person.

He seized the opportunity to speak to the woman at the well. John 4 recounts the story of Jesus taking a detour through Samaria.

"Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon." 4:6

As the woman he met there drew him some water to drink, Jesus wasted no time.

"If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking *me* for a drink, and I would give you fresh and living water...Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst- not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."

This woman was a known adulteress. Jesus was tired and thirsty. But he didn't let these things get in the way of passing along his knowledge of God's love and the life He had available to this hurting woman.

And how about Mary and Martha, the time he was teaching and the paralytic was lowered through the roof and He healed him. What about Zaccheus and Nicodemus? What about the woman who touched His robe? Jesus stopped and recognized her faith. He stopped and noticed....in the moment!

### **Jesus Mentored in the Seasons.**

Jesus' ministry as a whole was basically a season. It was only 3 years. But during those 3 years, he spent time with people... both momentarily and extensively. His entire life was punctuated with stories. He took the time to talk with people. He listened and cared. He used parables to get a point across. He told stories to masses and individuals. And when people heard Him speak, they were so moved, they told others of what they had heard and learned.

The disciples were so convinced of his deity that they all died for Him. And it's all recorded for us to learn from ... and pass on!

### **And Jesus Mentored for a Lifetime. ...**

Jesus relished the time he spent with his disciples. They ate together, traveled together, prayed together, and wept together. Throughout the 3 years of Jesus' ministry, he lived with these younger men, passing along his knowledge of the Kingdom, teaching them the ways of the Lord, and empowering them to do ministry in the community. The disciples watched Jesus' ministry so closely that they were able to continue the work that he started after His death and

resurrection, proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom and salvation for all those who called on the His name. How did they know how to heal the sick? To cast out demons? By watching and learning from their teacher, Jesus.

**14 He appointed twelve <sup>la</sup> that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach Mark 3:14**

He spent enough time with his disciples so that they saw the authenticity in His life and His passion for His Father. They saw Him laugh and cry, heal the sick, care for the hurting, laugh with friends, and cry in anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. They saw him play with the children and eat dinner with a tax collector! They saw him minister to a prostitute and hang out with fishermen. They watched Him live out the things He was trying to teach them. And because of His love for His Father, and the 'realness' in which He loved each of them, they took on His characteristics and His mission. They saw His deity up close and personal.

Which leads me to this thought; this is bigger than you. Mentoring is more than cooking lessons, child rearing tips, and a shopping buddy, though all of those things are truly important. Mentoring is about passing on the story of your life, with God as the central character. True, there will be times when He doesn't feel central. He may feel distant and at times non-existent. It may seem that you, your problems or your fears have taken center stage. But no matter what your 'feeling' about Him is in the moment, you must realize that communicating an ever-increasing desire to draw close to Him, depend on Him and trust Him regardless of our 'feelings' is a message the next generation desperately needs to hear.

**2 You have heard me teach in front of many witnesses. Pass on to men you can trust the things you've heard me say. Then they will be able to teach others also.2 Timothy 2:2 NIRV**

The values, history and stories of God were passed on life to life. They were passed on as people walked down the road with their kids. They were passed on as they were sitting around the fire at night, drinking coffee (or whatever they drank!). Stories of God's miracles, stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, stories of captivity, deliverance, famine, and feast, all were passed on from families to tribes to the nation of Israel until the time of Jesus. And after the resurrection stories of Christ's healing and miracles, his grace, and the forgiveness available through him were passed on by the disciples, shaping the Christian world with their eyewitness accounts of the long-awaited Messiah, passed from generation to generation until the story reached your ears.

The story is not over. Each of us has a chapter to contribute, and most importantly, to pass on. These stories will touch the lives and hearts of future generations, if only we'd be willing to share what God has done in us. *That* is what mentoring is today; sharing the story of God and how he's worked in our life with those He puts in our path.

**What do I have to offer?**

What a loaded question! You have so much to offer and, if you're like me, you don't even realize it. .

***Your Experiences –***

Sharing your experiences, your story, with younger women is the key to relationship. Throughout the Bible, God instructed people to tell their children stories. Jesus continuously talked to and communicated with people through stories. He taught his disciples as they walked down the road.

Remember –

***You impress from a distance, but you impact up close and personal.***

Think of all the experiences you've had in your life: the good and the bad, that younger women could learn from. Did you go to college, get married, have children, move to a new town, or begin a new job? Did you battle depression, battle an illness, get into debt, lose a parent, a friend, or a child, lose a job, struggle with infertility, go through a breakup or get divorced? Women in their twenties are facing similar things, and hearing your story, how you got through it, hearing what God taught you through it and continues to teach you can help them. Just having your support can be a tremendous help to them. Whether you handled these seasons with grace or made some royal mistakes, you have something of value to share with the next generation.

God can speak to others through the experiences, the successes, failures, the loves and hurts you've gone through in your life. Through your spiritual journey!

Ask yourself, how did I get to be who I am today?

Who were the people that were most influential in my life?

For a moment? Season? Lifetime?

What were the big, major events that changed the direction my life was going in?

For the good or bad?

***Successes –***

Sharing the successes in your life gives hope to the next generation. Even if the path to the success was hard and filled with pot-holes, that story, in itself, holds encouragement to the next generation.

***Failures --***

Sharing failures with the next generation helps make us real. It helps them see that our life that might appear relatively great or successful has had ups and downs. It also shows them that there have been potholes in the path that led you to where you are today. Hearing your story, all of it, good AND bad, helps them to realize that it's not the end of the world when THEY fail. It's part of the journey. AND it makes us who we are. It is what God uses to shape us into who He wants us to be.

***Hurts –***

Life doesn't always turn out the way we think. Things happen ... some joyous, some difficult, some seemingly unbearable. But the fact remains that God is faithful to bring us through even the most trying of times, and does so that we might pass on news of his faithfulness to others.

***“He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God is there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of his healing comfort- we get a full measure of that, too.”***

***2 Corinthians 1: 3-5 MSG***



God can use your hurts to show others your vulnerability. Being vulnerable with someone is the quickest way for them to become vulnerable with you. The more you give emotionally, the more you get in return. The more you share, the more people will open up to you. To help the next generation, you must be willing to come clean and show that you have been on the hurting end of things. You can't keep the 'everything is fabulous!' face on all the time.

***Spiritual Journey –***

So how will they see Christ in my life? By sharing with them the journey that God has brought you on; the story he's telling through your life. This is where the rubber meets the road.

These are the things you share with those God puts in your path. See? You definitely have much more to share with others than you think! God has taught you tons of things! He's given you lots of opportunity to learn. You just need to recognize when God gives you the opportunity to share those moments with others, and act on it.

***So this is your curriculum.*** Your Experiences, Successes, Failures, Hurts and your Spiritual Journey. These are the things that impact other people. These are the things that will impact the next generation. Your life, touching other lives!

So let's get specific!

**Think about it ...**

The following is a culmination of questions to help you think of the things, skills, people and events God has given you or put in your life. Sometimes it's hard to think of things that God can use in your life. Use these questions and 'nudges' to think through your journey and see how God has used the things you've gone through to make you who you are today. Then take those experiences and pass them on. We encourage you to write down your findings. You will be encouraged and blessed when you look back over your notes and see how God has worked in your life! So get out a pen, and let's begin!

**Successes –**

What are some things that God has given YOU the ability to do?

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What are things you just have a knack for?

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What things do you LOVE to do?

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What are things that you are good at?

- Job/Career
  - Artsy / Creative
  - Listening
  - Encouraging
  - Painting ... houses!
  - Setting a budget
  - Cleaning
- 
- 
- 

Are there things you have done that would be considered achievements? Sports? Awards?

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What have you physically done that you consider accomplishments? Marathon? Flip a house? Organized your closet?

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Can you fold laundry well???? You'd be surprised how many 20somethings can't fold laundry!

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**Failures –**

Are there things in your life that have shaped you because of failure?

- Marriage
  - Relationship
  - School
  - Job
  - Ministry
  - Financially
- 
-

What are some things that have been painful experiences that have shaped your life?  
Loss of a child? Spouse? Parent?

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What are some choices that you've made in the past that you'd like a 'do-over' on?

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### **Hurts –**

How have you been hurt in the past?

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Who hurt you?

- Employers
- Friends
- Family

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How did that affect your 'trust-0- meter'?

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How did that affect your faith?

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Have you got over and through that? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you still dealing with it? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you learn from that experience? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you deal with that person?

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DID you deal with it at all? If so, did you do it in the right way?

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Do you wish you would have done something different? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, do you think it was best NOT to deal with it? Why or why not?

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How has this experience affected your relationships since then?

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Have you been hurt in the 'relationship' department? (love?)

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How did that affect you? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you deal with it? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider yourself a romantic or a realist? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the pros and cons of each? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a relationship now? \_\_\_\_\_

How's that going .... Really? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Spiritual Journey –**

So looking back over the topics that we've covered thus far, where do you see God's hand? Ask these question:

- How did God help you through the experiences?

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- What did you learn through those experiences?

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- What spiritual lessons did you learn during those times?

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- How did you learn those spiritual lessons? Through people, Scripture, a song, sermon, prayer? All of the above?

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- What experiences made you turn to God or draw closer to Him?

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- When did you feel distant from God? \_\_\_\_\_

- What is your relationship with God right now? Honestly? \_\_\_\_\_

- Are you going through a spiritually dry patch? \_\_\_\_\_

- How does that feel? \_\_\_\_\_

- What is he teaching you right now?

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- What softens your heart toward him? People, music, nature, solitude? \_\_\_\_\_
- How is Christ working in you now?

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Along with what God has taught you through the experiences in your life, think about this...

- How many sermons you've heard and Bible studies you have attended.
- How many retreats have you gone to?
- How many times have you had a quiet time?
- What has God taught you in those times?
- How did he speak to you?
- What about prayer?
- How has God answered your prayers?
- What is a specific prayer that you KNOW God answered?

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- How do you know that? Did he say no?

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- How did he confirm His answer in you heart?

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God used all of these things to shape you into who you are today. And He will continue to shape you. So use what He's taught you to impact someone He has put in your path. Maybe your journey will help her to keep from falling into a huge pothole on *her* path.

***Your Calendar ---***

Most mentoring studies have you set a specific day and time to meet every week. Although this has been extremely successful in the past, 20somethings are wired very differently. They have short attention spans and are more apt to do something on the fly than on a planned schedule.

The answer is mentoring 'as you go'. When God puts a young woman in your life, instead of meeting her every week at the coffee bar, take her along with you. When you start thinking in these terms, everything is a ministry moment. These are the times when she watches you. When your 2 year old throws a conniption fit in the middle of Target, how do you respond? When you get the phone call that you need an appointment with a teacher. She watches you when your husband calls and asks you to do him 'a favor' which takes an hour and a half out of your day and puts you that much further behind. These are the 'life moments' where she watches how you live out your Christian walk.

These are also the times when the conversations come up about struggles she's having. How does she deal with her temptation? What should she do about a relationship? How should she go about addressing an issue? These conversations don't happen at church. They happen as relationships go deeper and trust is built. As you let them in, they will let you in.

This is an awesome concept when you think about it! You don't have to add another thing to your schedule, you can get your 'to do' list done, AND you can mentor in the process. It's the way Christ did it!

He was never too busy to speak to someone in need.

So we've included a couple 'mock' schedules. Look at each calendar with the question '*Could I take someone with me to do this?*' Use this calendar as an example to start thinking of ways you can have someone come along side and watch you 'as you go'.

### *Calendar with 9-5 Career/Job*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 6-7:30 Dinner 8-10 Favorite TV Night	7-8 Gym 9-5 Work 6 – 9 Dinner and a Movie	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 12 – 1 Meet friend for Lunch 6-7 Dinner	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 6-7 Dinner 8-10 Favorite TV Night	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 7-9 Theatre	9- Walk the Lake 10-1 Errands & Lunch 5:30-7 Cook my Favorite Dinner	8:30-1 Church & Lunch 2-5 BarBO w/Friends

### *Calendar of Stay at Home Mom/Gal*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9-10 Gym 10-11:30 Laundry/ Housework 12-1 Lunch 3:30-4 Pick up Kids 6-7 Dinner w/Family 7:30-8:30 Kids finish Homework and Bed	8 Drop Kids 1:30 Pedicure 2:30 Grocery Store 3:30 Pick up kids 4:30 Soccer Practice	7:30 Gym 12 Lunch 1:00 Hair Appt 3:30 Pick up Kids 7:30 Kids finish up hw and bed	9:00 Shopping & Lunch 3:30 Kids 7:30 kids HW and bed	7:30 Gym 9- Laundry & Clean House 12-Lunch 3:30 Kids 4- Take kids for ice cream and park 6-Dinner & Movie	10- Yard Work 12- Lunch 1:30 Soccer Game 5- Family B'day Party	9:30- Church & Lunch 1- Walk 2:30- Movie during sports 6- Dinner w/ Family

Look at your own calendar and start looking for opportunities to have someone come along side and live life with you 'as you go'!

**Things to Do Together: Put a check mark by the possibilities you could implement.**

1. Take a walk.
2. Go to the gym.
3. Pick up your kids from school.
4. Go to the park with your kids.
5. Grab a cup of coffee.
6. Go to lunch.
7. Do you need to bake cupcakes for your kids' class? Do it together!
8. Go shopping.
9. Help her decorate her apartment.
10. Teach her to cook your dinner specialty.
11. Have an at home movie night.
12. Go to the movies.
13. Join a Bible study together.
14. Go to church together.
15. Meet her on her lunch break.
16. Watch your and/or her favorite show.
17. Go to a bookstore.
18. Help her plan a special night for the special someone in her life.
19. Go to the pet store (who doesn't love puppies?!)
20. Celebrate holidays.
21. Go to the grocery store.
22. Do you need a house sitter? Why not ask her?
23. Show up for their special events.
24. Try out a new restaurant together
25. Join a ministry together.
26. Get a pedicure.
27. Go to a sporting event.
28. Go to the airport together.
29. Family days ... Take her along!
30. Have her over in the evenings ... let her watch what reality is!
31. Have her over if she has an afternoon off
32. Take her magazines and chicken soup when she's sick
33. If she needs to meet with her friends and they can't find a place, offer your home.
34. Help her clean her apartment
35. Surprise her with little gifts you know she loves! (even if they're out of your comfort zone!)

**Are you technologically challenged?**

1. Have her teach you how to text message...
2. Do you have an iPod? Get one! They are awesome! Then have her teach you how to use it.
3. Download music that she likes and talk about the genre.
4. Ask her what a genre is! ☺
5. Ask her about starting a blog! Your family could have a blog where anyone in your family could add to it!
6. Do you need some help with your computer? Ask her!
7. Talk to her about the perks and dangers of MySpace



### Marks of Mentoring –

These 8 things are basically the foundation of mentoring the next generation. They are the '8 commandments' of mentoring ... so to speak! They aren't hard or time consuming, but without them, you will be ineffective.

- **You must be authentic** – BE REAL -- Earlier I talked about what type of people we all are more comfortable being around ... those with flaws or those that have got everything totally together. But which ever category you are in, the flawed or unflawed, the main thing you have to be is REAL. You must be who you are. The lovely AND unlovely. The happy or sad, contemplative or mad... whatever. Be what you are. Now, you may need to go back and fess up to not acting Christ-like in moments. But those are great teaching times on tons of levels. They may have never seen someone our age apologizing to someone their age. They may have never seen anyone apologize ... period! It gives you great conversation about what you should have done, how Jesus would have reacted. It will show her you can still be a Christian, love the lord and screw up!
- **Listen and Learn** – We don't have to have all the answers. In fact, we don't have to have hardly any of the answers. But we must learn to listen. Listen and hear what they are saying. There may be an underlying guilt or anger issue. There might be some family issues or sexual issues. They need someone to talk to. Some have no one to talk with except people their own age. While that is helpful, it isn't always good advice. And some definitely don't want to talk with their parents. Be sensitive to know when you need to seek help. Don't get in over your head. If there are issues that are beyond your scope of advice, volunteer to go with her to meet with a counselor. In fact, in our center section, there is a list of things that are helpful to know about the girls you invest in. This list will help you know their background better so you will be able to understand where they're coming from and pray for them in a clearer more specific way.
- **Confidentiality** – This is a non-negotiable. This generation is adult wary anyway. They definitely do not need to confide in an adult only to have that person turn around and tell someone else. If you feel there is an issue that you need help with input, ask her if it would be okay for you to get some advice from a couple of other people. She will be so grateful that you asked her and will give you more chips in her eyes.
- **Ask the right questions.** Bill Hybels asks the question, 'How are you ... really?'. That's a great question! Learn to listen. Be sure that you are talking less than she is. Be sure that you are listening more. Try to truly hear what she is saying. What is her underlying tone or attitude? Is there more to this story? Is she carrying baggage into this decision or conflict? Ask questions to help her see what is really going on and so she can figure out what the right response to an issue is.

Asking questions is the quickest way to get to know someone. People love to talk about themselves. But remember, Bridgers are already a little skiddish when it comes to 'their elders'. But having someone in the boomer generation be genuinely interested in them is inviting. The key word here is 'genuinely'. So when cultivating a relationship with the next generation, the gift of listening is invaluable.

- **Encouragement is key** ... Always, always encourage. If you think the decision she is planning on making is not the right one, then address the issue. But at the end of the conversation, make sure she knows that you love her and support HER even if you disagree with her decision. The bottom line is don't judge her. Love her. You can disapprove of what she does without disapproving of her. So love her through it all ... good and bad. No matter what. Encouragement goes a long way with this generation ... and to be honest, with ALL generations. We all like to be encouraged. We like to be valued. So tell her when she's doing a good job. Tell her when you realize she is making great decisions. Tell her when you see her confronting issues and people in a different, better way than she did a year ago. Tell her when you see changes happening in her life. How awesome to hear that from someone who loves you and you love them back
- **Pick your battles** ... play your chips when needed – I have the picture in my head of a stack of poker chips. We keep collecting them as relationships progress and then there comes a day when you need to cash a few in. These are the days that you see some bad choices or an attitude that has crept up. This is the time to play your chips. You know the old song, 'You got to know when to hold'em and know when to fold'em. The same

goes for mentoring relationships. There are times that you have to listen, hear, tell them what you've learned in your life and what God has taught you through similar circumstances. But then there is the Yellow or even Red Flag that is waving frantically in the wind. These are the times where you play your chips. You've earned the right to speak into her life. You're seeing warning signs or danger flags all around a situation. This is the time where you pray hard, suck it up, and lay down your hand. These moments are few and far between. But they are also times when God calls you to be Him with skin on. Who will tell her what she needs to hear if you don't tell her? Pick your battles wisely. If the battle is she wants a tattoo, that's not a hill to die on. But if she's thinking about moving in with her boyfriend or starting to get swept up into a bad crowd. That's a battlefield worth dying on. Don't mother her, or judge her. Just love her but tell her truth.

- **Look for the God moments** – While you're on the journey with her there will be all kinds of moments. Moments filled with fun, laughter, sadness and tears. Be aware in the midst of the times when to add the God moments'. The perfect time to interject something God has taught you in your life. An event or memory where God moved powerfully in you and taught you something in that time. Even in the midst of disciplining your kids, she can see the way a Christian family should operate. And if you screw up in that area, you can talk to her about that too. There are God moments in every happening. We just need to be aware of them and ready to act on them.
- **Be the initiator** --Throughout scripture there are passages where we are instructed to 'teach the next generation.'<sup>8</sup> It never says, 'wait until they come to you ...then teach them!' That's why this shift in thinking is so important. We need to be the one who keeps looking for those God puts in our path. We need to be aware of the God moments and act on them. We need to look through the lens of 'I want to be your friend,' not 'I want to disciple you.'

I've been looking through the scriptures, and can't find one time that a mentoring/discipleship relationship was initiated by the mentee. You could maybe make the case for Elijah calling Elisha in 1 Kings 19. But other than that ... the mentor is always the initiator. Yes, there were MOMENTS of mentoring that were definitely initiated through a circumstance or a short contact by a younger mentee type person., But when it comes to extended relationships, they were always initiated by the person who had been around the block a few times.

Examples? Paul chose Timothy, Moses chose Joshua, Jesus chose his disciples, except for Andrew and he was a referral! This would make a great Bible study<sup>9</sup>. Mentoring relationships of the Bible! The point is WE need to change our lens and start initiating relationships with the younger generation.

- **Keep your own walk fresh** -- As you start on this journey, you'll realize that you will grow as much or more as the young woman God has put in your life. God will start teaching you things and start opening your eyes to different perspectives. You'll find the word starts taking on a different perspective. You start reading it with 'her' in mind. And how you can minister to her ... and others God will put in your path in the future. So read, have quiet times, stay current, keep up with trends, but most importantly – stay in the word...daily! God will speak to you ... and **THROUGH** you!

*I adore my three boys, but sometimes I just needed to hang out with a girl. Despite our age difference, Meagan and I have a lot in common. We both like chick flicks, creative things, Mexican food and shopping. Our shared love of ice cream sealed the bond. She made my life more fun. I loved going with her to movies, out to eat and shopping at "Dead Betty's", that funky thrift shop. It was really fun!*

*I am such an introvert by nature, and tend to stand back from life and observe. Meagan has always been a bright spot in my life. My boys loved having her around, and she seemed to fit right in with our family. Whatever we were doing was fine with her. Whatever we were having for dinner was fine with her. I always liked that she never used the front*

<sup>8</sup> Scripture passages here .... Woman at the well, Disciples, Paul & Timothy,

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 48:11-13, Ps. 71:17-18; Ps. 78:1-6; Ps. 102:18; Is. 38:19; Joel 1:3;

door, but used the garage door, just like my family. She enjoys life and her enthusiasm rubs off. Being around her has inspired me to get out of my comfort zone, and jump into life.

I see in her a heart for people. She values others. She takes time out of her life to hang out. I have always felt whenever I see her, that I am not interrupting her life, but that she is really glad to see me. That makes me feel special. She is approachable. People of all ages like her

Meagan and I had the opportunity to go to Africa together. While we were there, we went into villages and immediately Meagan was surrounded by dozens of kids who wanted her attention. I stood back, rather overwhelmed by it all. She jumped in and started holding hands, and holding kids and interacting with everyone. She spent the trip showing God's love, to people who desperately needed it. She is an inspiration. I loved sharing that amazing trip with her.

I have been able to see Meagan walk through her teenage years. And Connie, I have also watched you allow Meagan the freedom to make choices and allow her to be who she is. I have seen your relationship with her, and how you have spent time with her and talked to her, and now I see you reflected in her passion for life. God used Meagan's relationship with her dad to model to me, what a healthy father/daughter relationship looks like. Because of you and Lance, Meagan has gained a confidence and assurance in the way she lives life. I want to give that to my kids. So, I guess you were mentoring me.

It has been a joy for me to be able to watch Meagan grow from a little girl who loved God, to a teen who was sorting things out, to an amazing young woman who has made her faith her own. It was so awesome to see God honored and celebrated in her wedding. God's hand is on her life.

Thanks so much for including me in your lives. It has meant more to me than you'll ever know. Even though you may consider me a 'mentor' in Meagan's life, I feel like she's taught me much more than I've taught her.

Lindy Bridgers  
Las Cruces, NM

***FYI –It’s All About Her!***(For Your Information -- *ONLY!*)***Don’t take this with you and take notes! That would be bad!***

This is a list of things that you may want to eventually find out about whoever God puts in your life so that you can get a better picture of who she is and how she became who she is. This will help you pray for her more specifically and will help you to pray more clearly for wisdom for yourself in certain areas. But this happens with time and through relationship. This list is not, *by any means*, intended to be a fact sheet, or a to do list.

- Name -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Age -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Brothers/ Sisters -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Mom/ Dad -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Where do they live? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are they ...married/separated/divorce/living?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is she ... single/married/separated/divorce? \_\_\_\_\_
- Travel? Nationally? Internationally?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Passion for ....? \_\_\_\_\_
- Job \_\_\_\_\_
- Career \_\_\_\_\_
- Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_
- Success \_\_\_\_\_
- What are her thoughts on marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
- Morality Meter? \_
- Currently involved in a relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- Recently involved in a relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What went wrong?
  - What was right?
- Animal Lover? Pets? \_\_\_\_\_
- Conservationist? \_\_\_\_\_
- Vegetarian? \_\_\_\_\_
- Religious Background? i.e. grew up in church? Catholic? Baptist? AG? \_\_\_\_\_

- Christian home?
  - What age did she start attending church? \_\_\_\_\_
  - With family? Friend? By herself?
- Currently attending church? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is she curious about spiritual growth? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is she currently in a small group or bible study? What are they studying? \_\_\_\_\_
- Other?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **My Walk With Susan**

*It started with her daughter doing cartwheels on the beach. She was young, new into gymnastics, and I was a coach. Helping her form while playing on the beach at our church's young generational ministry annual beach retreat, led to meeting her mother...the head pastor's wife of that ministry. She used to be a hair stylist some time ago, and offered to cut my hair at any time. I immediately took her up on it. Free haircut! WooHoo! That's how it all started. That's how she began to walk with me.*

*Susan actively became my mentor for the next six years to follow. It didn't start off in a church meeting... me, a young 20-something, longing for mentorship, leading and guidance from an older wiser woman in the Lord, heading to the women's ministry meeting at church, hoping and praying for the right match. It started from an older wiser woman in the Lord looking out for the younger generation, knowing she (I) needed mentoring, leading, and guidance, simply because it was a Biblical idea, and she was a Bible following woman.*

*We began meeting on Tuesdays, informally. It worked with her family and my work schedule. I was fairly new in the area, an avid volunteer at church, and she was a woman with a heart for the next generation of women. Susan and I met at her house, or the mall, or her daughters' volley ball or basketball games. We'd talk in the car en route to do errands, en route to go shopping for her latest house accessories, or to the book store to get the latest Christian book that she had read and thought would impact me, based on who she had come to know me as. We'd do laundry together while her kids were doing homework upstairs and her husband was at the Elder's meeting at church. We'd cook dinner together while her oldest daughter was watching TV and her youngest was practicing the piano for her lesson the next day. We'd go shopping, at the outdoor Outlets, of course, for the latest bargain, or simply just to have a place to walk and talk. We'd meet for tea, coffee, lunch, dinner, or breakfast. I'd dog-sit when she needed it if I could, and I'd offer to take the girls to spend some great time with them, to have another older woman in their lives to talk to, outside of their own mom. Susan trained me how to be a mentor, as she lived it, and didn't need to teach it with words.*

*Susan was, and continues to be, a great mentor and role model. She would answer my phone calls of the latest drama, and sometimes chose to ignore them, knowing in her heart I needed to rely more on God than on her. She protected her family. When we were supposed to meet and something within her family revealed greater importance, we were postponed. Susan rarely gave her opinion. More so, she led me in asking questions leading back to God, and teaching me self-learning with the Teacher Himself. We talked about the books she recommended, and always reviewed the Truth of the Word within our daily lives for application. Susan listened, watched, and allowed me to join in her life.*

*She modeled what she taught. She never offered a book she didn't read herself. Never offered a Bible Study she wasn't doing herself. Never offered advice she hadn't swallowed herself, or advice that wasn't asked for. She gently reprovved when necessary, and lovingly never judged, even in confession of my sin. Like Jesus, she listened, and like the woman at the well, I left feeling love and forgiveness from someone who just found out everything that I had done against the Lord. Every single time I left her presence, I felt the joy of the Lord, and the freedom of forgiveness.*

*By Susan's modeling, I saw a Godly marriage. Not a perfect one, but a Godly one. I saw her and her husband out-serve each other. She didn't have to tell me about serving my one-day-to-be-mate...she allowed me into her life, her home, and her family's life, to learn and see for myself. She didn't try to be something she wasn't, but offered me all she was. She shared the wisdom*

*that she had from her own life, marriage, children, past, family, experiences, etc. She loved me where she was at. She loved me where I was at. She enveloped everything I have looked to in a mentor since our time together.*

*I have since become a mentor and discipler to many younger women in my life. Susan has since moved across the country, and I, soon to marry a missionary, will travel the world by boat and spread the news of Jesus Christ, Lord willing, world-wide. I now look for that younger woman. I listen. I pray. I keep my eye open, and my heart aware, and my mind in tune for the next woman that Jesus will place in my path. I encourage others, even teens, to be looking for the younger one that the Lord will place in their path. And I implore the older generations to take the challenge, and responsibility, to offer themselves to those younger women around them. You are needed. We need you. We need your love, life, example, lifestyle, and help. You don't need to be perfect. God has built you perfectly for us.*

*Since my time with Susan, I have mentored many, fallen in love with the younger generation, and sought out the older one for the precious jewels of wisdom that they have to offer. I have been blessed to build a young women's ministry where we can talk about women's issues, and being Biblically based women of God, in a non-fluff, real life manner. I now am blessed with the opportunity to see Jesus' love lived out all over the world, by traveling with my soon-to-be-husband, and offer the same, everyday, love and guidance that were once offered to me every Tuesday.*

*It doesn't take a seminary degree. It doesn't take a life-time of struggles, or a perfect marriage (of which I hear there are none) ☺ It takes two women, and a willing heart. God will guide the rest, and change lives through it.*

*I owe Susan so much, and all the other mentors since, who have willingly chosen to delve into my life, and in the end, have a part in making me the best woman for Christ I can be, no matter the circumstances. Thank you Susan, and ALL of the other incredible women out there who give daily the talents they have, to those of us who are thirsting to be just a regular part of your day. Thank you for your willing heart. And thank you for your love*

*Karyn Long  
Metro Washington, D.C./NOVA*

## I get it ... What now?

Let's do a quick recap.

- Lifestyle mentoring is a matter of changing your lens to see the women God has already placed in your life (or very soon will!) and intentionally developing a relationship with them.
- There is no program; you simply invite her to walk with you through life, be it at your home, running errands, or over coffee.
- Your curriculum is your life; your experiences, successes and failures, joys and sorrows, and most importantly, how God has impacted you through it all.
- Ignore the myths – There is nothing that Satan would like better than for you to believe the lies he's feeding you ... or better yet, just wait and don't do anything!
- Embrace the Marks – the non-negotiables of mentoring. You could be doing this already! Just recognize it, and be more intentional!

## Now what ...

Here are some steps for you to get started.

- **PRAY** -- Pray that God would start changing your lens. Pray that He would reveal young women in your life that would benefit from a deeper relationship with you. If you aren't aware of any young women in your life, pray that God would bring someone, and that He would give you the eyes to see her as He intended.
- **START** --Start developing existing relationships. Start changing your lens. Start inviting this young woman deeper into your life. Be the initiator. Start taking steps to begin building new and lasting relationships with the next generation. You won't be disappointed!
- **EXPLORE** – Explore the tools we have provided in the previous section. They will help you to develop your life curriculum, discover the times in your schedule that are mentoring opportunities in hiding, and offer some good tips for connecting.
- **CONNECT**—Connect with a friend or two to partner with you in this journey. It always helps to have someone in your life, your age, who's on the same page. Someone who is already doing this and is just starting to realize it, or someone who is willing to jump in the boat with you!

Sometimes we can't see something that's right in front of us. It just takes a good friend to point it out. Ask your friends to be an extra set of lenses, on the lookout for a girl who could benefit from a relationship with you or a girl you could start being more intentional with, and encourage your friends to look for the young women in their own lives. Having a friend along for the journey can also be encouraging when you have minor snags in your relationship (as every relationship inevitably will).

*"It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. ? And if one falls down, the other helps, But if there's no one to help, tough!"*

*Ecclesiastes 4:9 (MSG)*

OR introduce this as your discipleship/mentoring strategy in your already existing Women's Ministry. Let me make this clear. This shouldn't be a program within itself. It *SHOULD* be a component of your already existing programs. Just take these principles, lay them out for your women, and then make it a point to do a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly check up. For example, on First Meeting week, check in with each other and see if your lens is being refocused. Do you see a girl in your life differently? Are your lenses still a little cloudy? Have women in your life suggest times when you could be more aware of your surroundings and who God puts in your path. What is her name? What are your next steps? Compare calendars. What are you learning from her? What are you learning about yourself through this relationship? How are you developing the relationship? Are there prayer requests that you can share with the group concerning her? Be sure and share praise reports! Tell those around you how God has



answered prayer in her life. Share how God is using her to keep your walk fresh! Share how God is using you in her life! WOW!!!! How powerful!

Once 'lifestyle mentoring' is introduced into the DNA of your women's ministry, the rest will fall into place. You will start viewing everything you do through the 'discipleship/mentoring' lens. It will become a part of you, not just an 'add on' ministry or program. You won't need outreach programs because your lifestyle is all about outreach. Once you start implementing this into your life, everything and everyone around you changes. You will start seeing everything through the filter of impacting the next generation.

God has given you the opportunity to touch someone's life. You may see her clearly, or you may not see her at all ... yet! But she is there. God has given *YOU* the story that she needs to hear and the tools to help her grow.

In Mark 3:14, the Bible says,

*14He appointed twelve—designating them apostles<sup>a</sup>—that they might **be with him** and that he might send them out to preach*

Jesus knew the benefit of spending time with people. He knew that the only way for the apostles to see the authenticity, the reality of His deity was to watch His life. He wanted them to BE with him, that he might send them out to tell others of Him.

He wants you to do the same!  
So remember:

## **W – Watch**

For those God puts in your path ... Change your lens

## **A -- Allow**

Allow God to work through you  
Allow young women into your life

## **L – Look for the God Moments**

## **K – Keep**

Keep it real! Be authentic  
Keep it fresh! Keep your walk with God fresh!

**YOU CAN DO THIS!**

We invite you to take the following pages and write down what God is teaching you about:

### Yourself

Jot down the things God brings to mind about your own journey. The things God has taught you through your successes, failures, hurts, joys, etc. Go through the list provided. Pray, meditate and really think about the journey God's brought you on to this point. Write down what big things he's taught you, *how* he taught you and those God used to speak into your life during those times.

Look at the Calendar and compare it to your own. Write down opportunities to have someone come along with you. Start praying about the 'who' in your life. Who has God put in your path that is a few steps behind you on the journey.

### Her

Once you have recognized 'her', write down how you met, the connection, the start of the journey and the things you are praying for her about. Write down moments that you share together, insights she has that impacts YOU! Fun times and memories are always great to remember. If there are concerns for her, write those down and pray, pray, pray! God will give you the perfect time to share those concerns with her.

Basically, just use the following section as a prayer journal to help you remember where God has brought you from and what He's brought you through. And then, write down specific things to pray for those God puts in your life.

Someday, God will give you the perfect opportunity for you to share this journal with her. What an awesome tool to show her how far she's come, how you've been praying for her, what YOU have learned from her, and how you've seen her grow both emotionally AND spiritually!





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4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. 5 He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, 6 so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

Psalm 78:4-7

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Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O  
God. Let me proclaim your power to this new  
generation, your mighty miracles to all who come after  
me.

*Psalm 71:17-19 (NLT)*

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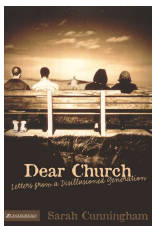
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## **Recommended Reading List**



**Dear Church: Letters From a Disillusioned Generation**  
By: Sarah Cunningham  
Zondervan / 2006 / Paperback



**Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality**  
by Donald Miller  
Thomas Nelson/2003/Paperback



**The Bridger Generation**  
By Thom S. Rainer  
B&H Publishing Group/2006/Paperback



BUY THE BOOK  
**unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters**  
by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons  
*Baker Books/October 2007/Hardcover*

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## **Preface**

I would never, in a million years have considered myself a mentor. And never in *two* million thought that I would be writing a guide for women on mentoring!

I am not well read or an educator, and don't consider myself brilliant by any stretch of the imagination! I am just an everyday woman. I struggle with the same things you struggle with. I love the same stuff you love and I have vices and temptations just like you do! But God wants to use me ... and he wants to use you too!

In my early years as a pastor's wife I sometimes felt inadequate and under qualified in nearly every area of my life. I knew all of the principals of 'spiritual health', I had the 'forsake not the assembly' and 'fellowship' down pat! But when it came to discipleship or evangelism, my score card dipped drastically! And when it came to 'passing on what I know' and investing in the next generation ... forget it!

But a few years ago, I realized that I didn't have to be at a certain level with certain criteria before God could use me. In fact, **I** was setting that criteria for myself, not God. He was ready to use me all the time, but I had to be ready and willing to step out in faith and act when He put opportunities in front of me.

Looking back over my life, I had been involved in discipling and mentoring moments tons of times. I just didn't look at what I was doing as 'spiritual'. I saw my actions as nothing more than being a friend, hanging out with a younger woman, one just a little behind me in the stages of life.

I see things differently now.

My husband calls it 'the gift of hang' ... seeing the opportunity to spend time with younger women and intentionally watching for the times I can inject a 'God moment' or 'life lesson' into the mix.

God wants to use you, right now just as you are. He probably already IS using you to impact other women ... you just don't see it.

That's why Walk With Me was developed. So you can see the next generation through a different lens, you can recognize the opportunities God has put in front of you, and you can act on them.

It's easy, it's fun, it isn't time intensive, and best of all, it's how God designed discipleship and mentoring to be!

If I can do this, believe me, YOU can do this!!!!

## Walk With Me ...

### An Invitation to Impact the Next Generation

*4 We will not hide these truths from our children we will tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the LORD, about his power and his mighty wonders. 5 For he issued his laws to Jacob; he gave his instructions to Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach them to their children, 6 so the next generation might know them—even the children not yet born—and they in turn will teach their own children.*

*Psalm 78:4-6 NLT*

Several years ago God put a 19 year old woman in my life named Cathi. We met in the music ministry at our church and shared an instant connection. She worked in the same building as my husband at the church so I started intentionally dropping by her desk whenever I came to visit him. It was during these impromptu chats that our relationship really began. I started taking her to lunch, emailing her, and occasionally called to check on her. Eventually I asked her to go shopping, or I would call her up to make a quick COSTCO run with me. We would talk about all sorts of things, from recipes to ministry. I never would have considered our relationship to be a 'mentoring' relationship. But it was!

As my relationship with Cathi grew, I realized she was opening up to me about more personal, even deeper things. She had questions about God, spirituality, the future of the church, the Bible, and even just the every day stuff of life. I was no expert in these areas, and never pretended to be. I tried to let my life speak louder than my words, and she seemed alright with and even drawn to that. God showed me I didn't have to be a Bible scholar or great teacher to mentor. I just needed to have the freedom to be me, to be available and to be willing to share what I already know.

After a while Cathi started introducing me to her friends and we would all spend time together. Before long I realized that they were all struggling with the same questions and issues, and had few people to turn to for answers other than their peers. That's when I realized how great the need was in that generation. They all needed a woman that was a little older, a little wiser, and a little farther down the road than they were, but willing is to be real and vulnerable with them. They needed someone to walk with them through life situations. They needed someone to listen, not remedy or solve their problems. Someone who would will first love them, but then talk with them, guide them, and point them in the right direction. They needed someone who loves and trusts God, but messes up and is willing to talk about it!

Mentoring relationships were the way to connect with the next generation. I knew that other women like me were just the ones for the job. But I hate the word mentoring. It seems to conjure up, thoughts of overwhelming responsibility, endless supplies of wisdom, long-term commitments and time-consuming meetings. So how could I get past this overwhelming, unattainable job of mentoring without asking them to add another task to their already jam-packed schedules?

God had the answer to all of my questions... *Walk With Me: An Invitation to Impact the Next Generation*. How? By *lifestyle* mentoring!

So how is *Walk With Me* different from conventional mentoring programs? *Walk With Me* is an informal, yet intentional mentoring model. It is informal in that it is unstructured; there is no curriculum, there is no formula for how to spend your time, or even a time commitment, and there is no 3<sup>rd</sup> party matching (unless you want to count God as that 3<sup>rd</sup> party!). It is a totally organic process.

Totally organic, but completely intentional. You will begin to cultivate relationships intentionally as you start to view the next generation through a different lens. You will see conversations as opportunities to share what God has taught you through your own personal experiences and through Scripture. The difference? **You do this through relationship, not a program.**

God has shown me through this journey that mentoring is not just about going through a book or sitting down and doing a Bible study together. It's about walking through life together. It's simple, convenient, fun, but most of all, it is God's plan to help spiritual growth happen.

Bottom line, ***mentoring is not a program, it's a lifestyle.*** It's developing a friendship with someone one step behind you in the journey of life, spending time with them recognizing the fact that God has put you together for a purpose, and making a point to interject life lessons and point out God-moments as you go ... *together!*

You may be thinking, "Mentoring can't be that simple!" I assure you it can. Cathi and I have developed the following guide to help you understand lifestyle mentoring and the importance of investing in the next generation. We are confident there is a quality mentor within each of you!

So we ask you to accept our invitation to impact the next generation ... life to life.

You can do this!  
Let us show you how!

### **Why does the Next Generation need a different kind of mentoring?**

*And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. ... New wine calls for new wineskins." Mark 2:22 NLT*

Now is the time for new wine skins. The new wine, in this case, is the amazingly complex generation called 'GenY', 'Bridgers', 'Mosaics' and/or 'EchoBoomers and the younger 'Gen X'" ... Whatever you label you give that generation, they are full of life and flavor and bursting at the seams to contribute to their world.

The new wine skin? The way to reach them ... lifestyle mentoring. The methods that we used to reach the next generation 25 – 30 years ago or even 10 years ago are not effective with this generation today.

How can we impact them? We must first try to understand them.

*Echo boomers are a reflection of the sweeping changes in American life over the past 20 years. They are the first to grow up with computers at home, in a 500-channel TV universe. They are multi-taskers with cell phones, music downloads, and Instant Messaging on the Internet. They are totally plugged- in citizens of a worldwide community.<sup>1</sup>*

Steve Kroft, CBS Correspondant  
Children of Baby Boomers

This is the generation born between the year 1977 and 1995. These dates vary depending on the source. But this fact stands firm ... This generation is the generation of baby boomer children.. It is the largest generation since the boomers themselves, 72 million strong. It is the most studied generation by sociologists, demographers and marketing consultants since their parents.

*They will be the dominant adult population group for at least the first half of the next century. In 1995, the bridgers accounted for 27.5% of the total U.S. population. Though the boomers were slightly larger, the bridgers will be the ones moving into positions of power and influence in the twenty first century.<sup>2</sup>*

Thom S. Rainer, Bridgers

In Thom Rainer's book, Bridgers, he makes a revealing comparison between the Boomer and Bridgers generations, The following is an extremely small portion of his findings:

#### **Two Different Worlds**

##### **Boomers**

Economic prosperity  
Mother's care  
"Father Knows Best"  
Ma Bell  
Free love  
VD  
Monocultural

Source: *American Demographics*, Thom Rainer, Bridgers

##### **Bridgers**

Economic Uncertainty  
Day Care  
Father isn't home  
Internet  
Condoms  
AIDS  
Multicultural

Does this sound like the childhood that we, the boomer generation, grew up in? Not in the slightest! But Bridgers are definitely a product of the environment in which they were raised.

The things that we invented, developed, and discovered as a generation, have become the normal, everyday, commonplace and even routine tools of the EchoBoomers.

<sup>1</sup> CBS, Steve Kroft Children of the Baby Boomers, 9/4/2005

<sup>2</sup> Bridgers, Thom Rainer, 2007



Think about it. Our generation invented the computer. This generation doesn't know how to function without one. Our generation started out with a telephone connected to the wall, progressed to a cordless and then to wireless. This generation vaguely remembers the phones attached to the wall, their parents and some of their friends own cordless, but their phone of choice is cellular. They are always accessible and don't know what it's like to be some place where they can't call or talk with someone else.

Let's put this in perspective. When I (a boomer) was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, I vividly remember my parent's purchase of a brand new car. A sweet teal colored Chevrolet Impala. But the really cool thing about it was that it had seat belts in it! A first! Not the shoulder harness kind of course... that came later. Just the plain, over your lap seat belts! I'll never forget this because I was so excited that I told my second grade class about it at show and tell ... 2 days in a row! I was sure that I was the envy of all of my peers! In contrast, the oldest member of the EchoBoomer generation has never known life without a seatbelt. They came out of the womb, into our arms and into a car seat and THEN home!

And think about this. Since they were babies, they've been put in front of the TV or at least with the TV on. NOW there are actually DVD's geared toward babies. Their classrooms settings have gone from individualized learning to team learning. Educators have realized that this next generation learns best in team. They do projects in team, they study in team, they practice in teams, they compete in teams and they even test in teams. Why does this method of teaching work? EchoBoomers aren't necessarily motivated by the thought of being better than everyone else in their class., as their parents were motivated to be. But, they don't want to be the weak link. So, therefore they are motivated to work hard so that their entire team succeeds! Basically, the success of the team takes precedent over the success of the individual.

This generation learned to depend on each other from a very young age. They also began to rely less on the adults in their life. Remember, this is the generation who grew up with Baby Boomer parents. The boomer generation is the generation where dual income households became the norm instead of the exception. So, when homework needed to be done, the first step was to call a friend. Networks were developed and established called 'Homework Hotlines' to help kids with homework questions when no one was around to answer them.

This generation is also called the pampered generation. They have been protected and coddled since they were born. They have never ridden a bike without a helmet and never learned any 'roller' activity without the presence of elbow, wrist and knee pads. We've cheered them on no matter how bad they were at something. To boost their self-esteem, everybody got a trophy at the end of the season, not just those that stood out in the 'talent' pool. The generation lived with a 'grade on the curve' mentality and some educators even adopted the 'independent spelling' philosophy with the mindset that computers will catch it at spell-check. This 'good intention' of the boomer generation has caused EchoBoomers to expect the same things in the work force. Reward for a less than a stellar job.

In contrast, we boomers worked our butts off and the kid that won everything in every sport always got the 'Most Valuable Player' award. The phrases 'Suck it up', 'Get Tough', 'Work hard' and 'Finish what you start!' were the mantras of our generation. I think my even parents bought me a trophy once!! I loved it!

And safety gear? *We didn't need no stinking safety gear!* We sat in the back of pick ups going down the highway at 70 mph and thought that was crazy cool! We felt special when our parents let us sit in their laps and steer the car. Airbags? What's an airbag????!!! Can you even imagine any of those situations happening today? It's amazing we made it through childhood!!!

Yes, the boomer generation is a unique generation in itself. We were raised by the Builder generation who believed in the values of work hard, work fast, duty to your country and sacrifice. They went through the depression, saw our country attacked, and went through World War II. They (builders) encouraged us (boomers) to express ourselves from an early age. Therefore, we were the key generation to fight for civil rights. The Boomers are the most successful, affluent generation in history. We set high standards for ourselves and expect to achieve them. We are project driven and goal oriented. We aim for a mark and have failed if we don't

hit it dead on. And during our journey, we had kids and families. And our kids have watched as we prospered and achieved our goals, yet divorce skyrocketed and families crumbled.

EchoBoomers are a product of this environment. They are used to having to deal with multiple families or have watched their friends have multiple families. We, as parents, tended to lavish material possessions on our children to make up for the lack of time spent with our kids. At the time, we felt like we were giving them all that we didn't have growing up.

This generation has responded by being independent, yet they are **relationally driven**. They have their own, individual ideas and ideals, but want to live them out with a group of friends. Even their choice of employment is influenced by their standard of community. Will they play a vital part of the team? Do they get to speak into the process? What is the chemistry with their coworkers? What is the bigger purpose of their work? What kind of global fingerprint is this company leaving?

We taught them to express themselves. We encouraged them to be whatever they wanted to be, and do whatever they wanted to do. We encouraged them to think independently. Bottom line, we raised them to be who they are today.

And though this next generation is definitely independent and suspicious of authority figures, there is an underlying need for adult interaction. The kind of adult that will encourage and exhort them.

The church is not exempt from the suspicions of this generation. Surveys taken by the Barna Group are showing alarming statistics regarding how the next generation is disengaging from the church.

*The most potent data regarding disengagement is that a majority of twentysomethings - 61% of today's young adults - had been church-ed at one point during their teen years but they are now spiritually disengaged (i.e., not actively attending church, reading the Bible, or praying). Only one-fifth of twentysomethings (20%) have maintained a level of spiritual activity consistent with their high school experiences. Another one-fifth of teens (19%) was never significantly reached by a Christian community of faith during their teens and has remained disconnected from the Christian faith.<sup>3</sup>*

So how do we re-engage this generation? How can God use us to help re-capture the hearts of this amazing generation?

Rex Miller of Relevant Magazine puts it like this ...

I hunger for life-changing, transformational insight, guidance and encouragement, and though that might be advertised on the label, I usually find that I get a package full of promises but can't seem to find the goods. The real goods, I've found, come in the form of faces and names—trusted relationships that turn the Word into flesh. And this is the Church's largest need, greatest opportunity and most pressing challenge: to deliver on the promise of transformation by finding and nurturing mentors.<sup>4</sup>

That's where you and I come in. We have the opportunity to impact this generation. We just have to discard the old wine skins that we've had for years, and start using the new ones that are more suitable for the next generation. We can do this! I know because I have witnessed it first hand.

There is a whole lot of statistical information in this section. But the truth is, sometimes it's better to hear from one who has been there and is experiencing this everyday.

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<sup>3</sup> Barna Group, Internet, September 11, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Rex Miller, Relevant Magazine, Internet

Cathi, a twentysomething herself, worked for a year studying the next generation. She did extensive research on the emergent church, post-modern movement and explored ways that the church could bridge the gap between the generations. Here is an extremely small overview of what she has learned about her generation as a whole.

## 5 Things Everyone Should Know about Our Generation

Every generation leaves a unique stamp on the world. The builders were a generation committed to hard work, family values, and a respect of authority. The boomers are a “me-driven” society, committed to individual progress, and the accumulation of material wealth.

While the next generation (be it X, Y, EchoBoomers, whatever) continues to be studied by everyone from marketers to sociologists, one thing has become quite clear; we hate to be labeled, stereotyped, or generalized. With that being said, there *are* a few important things you should know about us as a whole. So while I must beg the forgiveness of my peers for breaking it down in such “simple, general,” and perhaps controversial terms, here they are:

1. **We are independent.** We are a generation of latchkey kids, for the most part raising ourselves between the hours of 3:00 PM and 6:00PM. Many of us moved from house to house with a different set of rules with each set of parents and little stability. We learned to take care of ourselves and look out for our own best interests. We built strong, family-like relationships with our friends, confiding our deepest hurts and greatest joys with our peers instead of our parents. Involved in every after-school activity possible, time to connect with our parents was limited. Even at church (for those of us who went) we were separated from the adults and had an age-catered experience for each year of our spiritual journey.

So where does this leave us? Quite simply, longing for guidance, but resistant to direction. We don't want a mentor; we want a friend. Someone who will believe in us, encourage us, and be a sounding board for all of our random thoughts, questions, fears, hopes, and desires. I've heard this same principle described in regards to husbands and wives; women want to vent and emote while their husbands want to fix. Think of us as your wife (humor me). Lend a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, and trust that when we want your advice we will ask for it.

2. **We are highly connected.** Let's face it; technology has set a new standard in community. Cell phones, email, instant message- even cheap airfare has ensured that we are able to stay connected with anyone we choose at any time we choose. While in the past you may have had to wait until your 10 or 20-year reunions to catch up with your high school classmates, with services like MySpace and Facebook we can discover their marital status, mood for the day, what religion they practice, who their friends are, what music they listen to, and view endless albums of their pictures with just the click of a button. “Losing touch,” much like the home answering machine or handwritten letter, is a thing of the past.

So where does this leave us? With an expectation of availability. In a culture where “Boundaries” is such a buzz word, it's important that you don't communicate these boundaries as barriers. While the kind of accessibility technology affords appears to be surface level, my generation really wants access to *you*, and the deepest parts of you.

A while back I was facing a tough season of life. It seemed that everywhere around me marriages were falling apart, among my peers and my pastors alike. I was driving home late one Sunday night and got a call that another of my dearest friends had filed for divorce. She was 24 years old and I had been her maid of honor just 4 years earlier. I felt lost and confused and mostly alone. This institution in which I believed so strongly, seemed to be crumbling all around me. It was late, 11PM. With a hunch that she'd be awake I texted Connie's cell. Her response to my moment of crisis was availability. She told me to come over and we talked until 12:30, all about my fears and concerns, my disappointment in my friends and elders. She never told me I was being irrational, or that I had nothing to worry about. She assured

Builders:  
Born 1922 – 1945

Boomers:  
1946-1964

Busters:  
1964-1976

EchoBoomers:  
1977 – 1994

Millennials:  
1995 - Today

me that my fears were legitimate and that marriage was hard, but worth it. We talked about what it means to base a marriage on God's principles instead of the whims and waves of emotion. I didn't leave her house with all the answers on relationships or an overwhelming sense of contentment, but my fears seemed more manageable and the world less chaotic.

Availability doesn't mean abandoning your priorities; it just means fitting us into them. There have been plenty of times when she's kicked me out of her house because she's going to bed, or had to cut time with me short to spend time with her husband, kids, or friends (I mean...she *does* have a life!). But when it mattered, she was there.

3. **We are cause-conscious.** Perhaps because of the highly connected nature of our society, we are more aware of how our actions, purchases, and values affect others. Causes such as AIDS, poverty, environmentalism, animal rights, slave labor, fair trade, and sex trafficking pull at our heartstrings so deeply we are willing to change our purchasing habits, our eating habits, what coffee we drink, and what companies we support to display our commitment to what is right and just. Essentially, we long to be part of a cause that is bigger than ourselves, and there are plenty to choose from.

So where does this leave us? Primed to champion the cause of Christ. Don't question our idealism—show curiosity for our passion, and focus on the cause in common: the Kingdom. You may not understand us boycotting chocolate Easter eggs<sup>5</sup>, or making sure our shampoo is environmentally friendly and not tested on animals, but you do understand the cause of Christ. Rallying my generation around the Kingdom, reminding us of the ultimate cause, and the ultimate champion for justice and mercy is something we can be excited and passionate about together.

4. **We are multi-taskers.** It's a fast-paced world; who has the time to focus on just one task? My generation grew up doing homework in front of the television (without compromising the quality of our work), talking on the phone while driving and listening to the radio, checking email, browsing the internet, eating dinner, all while having an in-depth conversation with friends.

This multi-tasking generation is the perfect crowd for lifestyle mentoring. We have no problem diving into the deep stuff of life while cruising the mall or sitting at the park with you and your kids. If you'll listen, we'll talk. Going on a last minute errand? Call us. Spontaneous doesn't scare us, in fact we welcome it. If you keep us in mind, we will connect.

5. **We are naturally suspicious.** Wait. Before you roll your eyes, or wrinkle your nose, let me explain. In fact, no one I know has said it better than Sarah Cunningham in her book *Dear Church*. So I'll let her explain.

*...children of the sixties and seventies gained their political voice early. They became comfortable with expressing their ideals, singing and speaking freely about what they thought the world should be and about how they thought world powers should operate. Of course, they produced more than just some surviving records of Woodstock. Thanks to leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. and John F. Kennedy, our parents overturned life as it was and ushered in a new era of equal rights.*

*The learnings of the sixties and seventies became our parent's platform for raising children. And so, they encouraged us to be free thinkers, telling us that we live in a free country where the draft could be challenged and no one had the right to tell us what to do with our lives.*

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<sup>5</sup> Most manufacturers of Easter chocolate employ child slave laborers

*We were given permission to question the status-quo...if not outright encouraged to do so. Not only were we **not** forced to accept social norms, but we were in some way groomed to be suspicious of them.*<sup>6</sup>

So where does this leave us? With a need for authenticity. Reality is no longer what's real; it's what's on TV. Political leaders and pastors are on the same playing field when it comes to infidelity and dishonesty. What people say, what they do or how they act is generally disjointed. We want to trust you, we really do. Be real with us. Just show us that you live what you believe, or at least that you're trying. You'll gain our respect and our confidence.

Most importantly, we do not want to be your project. Set the whole mentoring thing aside; do you like spending time with us? Do you enjoy our company? If it feels forced, we will notice. We're not looking for flattery or fake- in fact there's nothing that turns us off more. This relationship should feel natural, not like a blind date.

Scared yet? I hope not. My generation is longing to connect with you. We have so many things we want to ask you, so many things we want to share with you. All you have to do is show us you care!

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<sup>6</sup> Dear Church: Letters from a Disillusioned Generation; Sarah Cunningham: pg. 92)

## **Mentoring – It's Not What You Think!!!**

*1-6Your job is to speak out on the things that make for solid doctrine. Guide older men into lives of temperance, dignity, and wisdom, into healthy faith, love, and endurance. Guide older women into lives of reverence so they end up as neither gossips nor drunks, but models of goodness. By looking at them, the younger women will know how to love their husbands and children, be virtuous and pure, keep a good house, be good wives. We don't want anyone looking down on God's Message because of their behavior. Also, guide the young men to live disciplined lives. 7-8But mostly, show them all this by doing it yourself, incorruptible in your teaching, your words solid and sane. Then anyone who is dead set against us, when he finds nothing weird or misguided, might eventually come around.*

Titus 2:1-8 MSG

If you're expecting some amazing reference material or a detailed 'to do' list of mentoring moments, this is not it. This is a totally different way to view mentoring. No books or curriculum needed. It's not a bible study. It's women passing on life to other younger women. The only curriculum you need is your life experiences, what God has taught you through those experiences and what he is teaching you now!

Think about it ... How many Bible Studies have you attended in your life? How many church services have you attended? How many retreats? How many times has God spoken to you thru a personal time alone with Him? How many times have you read 'Bible Stories' to your kids? And what about the relationships God is using to teach you about Himself? i.e. your friends, your family, your kids, a person in trouble? Those are just a few conduits through which God has been teaching you. The point IS, we all know much more than we think ... and we all know way more than we are sharing.

Start viewing your life through a different lens. You must see your life as a mentoring tool, a source of information to share with others. God has taught you through circumstances, both good and bad. He wants to use those times as teaching points so others can see His work in you.

So change your lens in the area of HOW you teach. SHOW others Christ, don't just tell them about Him. Show them through your everyday situations and circumstances how to live a Christ-like life. Share with them the things Christ has taught you as you go throughout your day.

I got a call from a friend in Texas a few days ago. We started talking about mentoring ... (imagine that!) Her comment to me was, 'Oh no! I can't mentor. I need a book or something. I can't do that!' ...I tried to assure her that not only does she *not* need a book, but especially in the beginning, she definitely *shouldn't* use a book. She's already mentoring the tons of girls that are at her house 24/7. She just doesn't realize it! When they stand in the kitchen with her and make cookies, or she teaches them to make a cake from scratch.... she's mentoring them. Then during those fun times, a subject will come up and she'll tell them what God has taught her in her own life through similar circumstances. Or she'll share what the scriptures say on a subject ... that's mentoring! She just hasn't called it that!

You could very well be mentoring someone right now, but you don't see what you're doing as mentoring. I certainly didn't! And I still don't *tell* anyone that's what I'm doing!!!! But what I HAVE realized is that when the opportunity comes along, and I have the chance to invest in someone God puts in my path, I become more intentional. I become more aware of the times I can interject 'God moments' into our conversation. I become more focused on the circumstances and the urgency of our time together. I realize that God gives us those moments not to waste them, but to use them to glorify Him.

We have to start recognizing these moments as significant and be willing to open up and share ourselves with others when God gives us the opportunity!

*I never took a class on how to mentor someone, or attended a tea or even read a book about it. It just started when we hosted and led a high school Bible study at our house for teenagers. We loved having the teenagers hang out at our house and we tried to make them feel comfortable, welcomed and loved in our home. The home I grew up in was always warm and welcoming and my parents always had time for my friends and I grew up knowing that was how I wanted the home that I would create to be. I think the mentoring just grew out of that open home. Bible study was on Tuesdays nights but I soon found that kids were stopping by on the weekends and weekdays after school just to hang out, rummage through my pantry and mostly to have a hug or an encouraging talk.*

*I had a small group of girls that I led at the Bible study and it became very "normal" for them to visit me frequently. I loved on these girls for 4 years. Just because they graduated from high school didn't seem a good reason not to welcome them into my home and my life. Of course they all didn't come all the time, but a few became "regulars" at the dinner table and on the weekends just watching TV with the family, playing games with my kids or just "hanging" with me while I cooked dinner or did laundry. I know these don't sound like exciting things that young girls would want to observe, but oddly enough they loved the fact that I would listen while I worked, and that they felt like part of a family. Many of them had moms that worked or were not in the picture due to divorce or other issues so these girls just loved being around a "mom".*

*My kids loved having them there (especially as my sons grew older and the girls were always cute!) and my daughter would watch us interact. I knew I was planting seeds in her adolescence when she might not have been as interested in talking with me if she hadn't seen other high school and now college girls do it so freely. It became normal for me to do the weekly grocery shopping with extra teenagers or college kids along. I think they even picked up little lessons as I talked through what I was going to cook or how expensive things were and how you had to make choices in life about little and big things. Every day events became opportunities for conversations about raising children, finding a Godly man or how to treat your family members. There were many days that we walked through the grocery store or mall wiping tears as they opened up and shared secrets and stories that would never have come out in a small group Bible study setting in front of other people. The intimacy of sharing life together made these moments possible and comfortable for all of us.*

*Now as these girls enter adulthood, some marrying and starting to consider families of their own, I look back at those moments of life we shared together, just walking through the every day issues of living in community, raising a family and serving God and I am so thankful for the chance to speak into the lives of these girls in ways that were so natural, so easy and so fun!*

*Kathleen Hamer  
Portola Hills, CA*



### **Get Over Yourself! ... In a Good Way!**

**Romans 6:15-18 MSG** -- 15-18 So, since we're out from under the old tyranny, does that mean we can live any old way we want? Since we're free in the freedom of God, can we do anything that comes to mind? Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in His freedom!

Freedom in Christ. What does that mean? Is that even attainable? I've heard that term my whole life and it's always seemed a little ominous to me. What IS freedom in Christ....really?

#### **Freedom from the past ...**

Not too long ago, my husband was consulting with a church in Vail, CO. We were on one of our 3 week consulting excursions so we had luggage spread out everywhere. We were going to West Palm Beach, Florida after this so we had everything from bathing suits to parkas packed. We had 4 large bags that we brought with us from California to Vail along with 2 carry-ons each with computer paraphernalia to boot ... literally! So there was baggage everywhere I looked. The image of Lance carrying all of this baggage down stairs into our room and taking over our surroundings is what started the wheels turning.

It was one of those days where the snow was coming down outside and the fire was blazing. It was about 11:00 a.m. and I was still in my pajamas (it was a pajama type day!) As I looked around, it became so clear to me. *The biggest reason mentoring is so difficult is because of the baggage that we've been carrying and continue to carry with us where ever we go.* Baggage of what we think we should be vs. what we are.

Out of the blue (or the heavens!) came the thought ... **freedom in Christ!** God wants us to be free to be who we are. And with Him living in us, we ARE 'free in Christ' ! It was so crystal clear!

Dictionary.com gives the following definition of freedom:

**freedom** -- *the right to enjoy all the privileges or special rights of citizenship, membership, etc., in a community or the like.*

We have access to the Father. We are a member of His family! We have the right to all the privileges He offers. But we limit ourselves in how we use these privileges because of the baggage we're carrying with us. We all want to walk in freedom, but we keep dragging heavy, cumbersome baggage with us everywhere we go.

5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. 8For if you possess these qualities in *increasing measure*<sup>7</sup>, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Peter 1:5-8 NIV

The Scripture above says in verse 8, '...if you possess these qualities in **increasing measure** they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive... Let's face it. We are who we are. God made us that way. But as long as we are striving to be more like Christ, wants to and is going to use us.

12-14'I'm not saying that I have this all together, that I have it made. But I am well on my way, reaching out for Christ, who has so wondrously reached out for me. Friends, don't get me wrong: By no means do I count myself an expert in all

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<sup>7</sup> Emphasis mine

*of this, but I've got my eye on the goal, where God is beckoning us onward—to Jesus. I'm off and running, and I'm not turning back.*

*Phillipians 3:12-14 MSG*

We don't have to have it all together before we start making a difference for the kingdom!

God wants to use us, just as we are, right where we are. He wants to use us with our short comings and our achievements. It doesn't matter if we are rich or poor, born in the country or in the city, our color or shape. It doesn't matter what personality, geographic location or financial status we have. Because He is in us, and we are doing all we can to **increase in measure** or be like Him, we have *freedom!* No judgment. No scrutiny. Just grace!

What does that have to do with mentoring? We are free to be who God made us to be so that we can share what HE has taught us with others. Those who God puts in YOUR life are not at all who God will put in MY life. I wouldn't be able to touch the lives of the people that you will be able to touch!!!! That's why we all have our different journeys....our different backgrounds and histories. So we can impact those God puts in our path and share our journey with them.

### **Freedom for the future ...**

A light came on in my head in that Colorado basement and I realized that God wants to use me no matter where I am in the journey. He wants to use all of me, not just the parts that most closely resemble Him. He wants to use the good, the bad and the ugly parts. He wants to use the parts people see and the parts people haven't seen. He wants to use ALL of those parts to help someone else on THEIR journey.

Let's get real honest here. What kind of people do you like being around more: those who are transparent, honest and are a little rough around the edges? Or someone who has it all together, the perfect family and knows the answer to any and all questions thrown her way? For me, it's the first kind of person. I like to know that I'm not the only one that doesn't have it all together. I like to know that just because I say 'crap!' or my husband and I fight doesn't mean I'm backsliding or 'sinful'. I'm not saying woman #2 IS saying that.... I'm just saying that sometimes I find myself feeling unworthy, less of a person or even less of a Christian because I AM struggling with those things.

So let's not compare. Let's just agree to get better. You talk about **FREEDOM!** This is a great way to look at the future. I don't have to be like someone else, I **SHOULDN'T** be like someone else. I need to be who God made ME! I need to be willing for Him to use me with all my rough edges exposed. I need to allow Him to smooth those edges. But in the process, be available and willing for Him to work or speak through me!

We all want to be better ... in every aspect of life. And as we get better, let's just choose to take someone along with us to see how we live life. To see us as we screw up, and as we succeed. To watch us as we continue to move forward knowing we aren't perfect and we don't have it all together ... But at least we know it, admit it, embrace it and are acting on it! We're intentionally looking toward Christ to improve our walk with Him. That's freedom!!! Freedom to go forward without fear, because He knows our heart! We want to be like Him! We want to walk closer to Him!

### **Freedom in the now ...**

He wants to use us. He wants to use who we are today. What we are today. How we are ... TODAY!

What does that mean specifically? It means he wants to use our experiences ...Our successes ...Our failures ...Our loves ... Our hurts ... Our life!!

He wants you to share your story. Sharing your experience and your story with younger women is the key to relationship. Throughout the Bible, God instructed people to tell stories to their children

As your kids get older, they are going to ask you straight, pointed questions. 'Why should I believe what you believe? How do you know it's the word of God? What makes you so sure?' The answer is not, 'because I said so' or even 'because the Bible says so!' Don't get me wrong. The Bible is crucial to our belief system and is our guide, the inerrant word of God. But your answer is in the stories, the experiences you've had that have proven Christ real in your life.

The same goes for the 20something generation. They are a skeptical bunch. They aren't going to believe just because you tell them to or because 'it's the right thing!'. They will believe because they love and trust *you*, and they see it lived out in your life. They will believe because they've heard it in the stories you've told them of Christ's faithfulness in your life. They will believe because they continue to see Christ working in and through you before their eyes.

### ***Free to be me!***

But they will only see Christ if you let them get close enough to see who you really are. Why is this so hard? Because we have come to believe and accept things that are just not true. You've got to embrace the freedom Christ has offered you to be you! To embrace this freedom, you must quit believing the lies that the enemy wants you to believe. I call these lies the ***Myths of Mentoring***.

### **Myths of Mentoring ...**

**I must be smart** – No ... you must be willing to share what you already know. God has taught you tons of stuff along your journey. That is what you must be willing to share with who ever God puts in YOUR path. So what if you don't have an IQ of 180! To be honest, most of the world wouldn't be able to connect with you if you did!!!!

God created *you as you* so you can use your story to touch the lives of those that God connects you with. You just have to be ready and willing to see and seize the opportunity.

**It's very time consuming** – No ... you must be willing to open up your life and allow someone to come along with you. You've got to start seeing your life and your daily schedule as an avenue to build relationships. I've learned that nobody has time to actually mentor. I'm sure that is an overstatement, but generally true! To think that I have to add one more meeting to my schedule is just too much to handle, so therefore I don't!!!!

Here's the thing ... you don't have to! The way to think about mentoring the next generation is to show them, not tell them. They want to see Jesus in your life. They want to see you walk the walk, not just talk the talk. So... take them along with you. Take them through life with you!

This does 2 things You can get accomplished what needs to be done in your world AND it satisfies the curiosity of the 20something to find out if your words match up to your life

When I started doing this years ago, I didn't think I was making a difference in the lives of young women. I certainly didn't think I was mentoring! I just thought I was hanging out with them and enjoying their company. But what I realized was that I was *showing* them Christ in my life and in my everyday world. They would go to the grocery store with me, or to the mall. They would travel with me to the airport or to an event. I asked them to go with me to church events or to family gatherings. I had them in my home while I was cooking supper and then had them join us for dinner.

What did this show her? It showed her ALL of me. The good, bad and ugly!!! It showed her how I responded when the clerk in the grocery store gave me the wrong change. It showed her how I responded when the guy that was in way too big a hurry cut me off at the mall! As we walked in the park, a woman came to me in tears and we all prayed together on the spot. She helped me cook dinner and laughed with us at the dinner table. She also saw me when my response was NOT like Christ. She listened when I talked to her about my anger ... and then I apologized to her because it wasn't the right way to respond. And then we talked about what the right response should have been.

*My relationship with Loisa evolved all on its own. In the midst of the day to day is where we do life together....in the midst of dishes, laundry, and children a friendship was formed that I will treasure for the rest of my life. I have never really thought of myself as a mentor to her, but I guess, in a way, I am. It's funny, looking back over the course of our relationship, I have wondered many times if I have gained more from it than she has. By listening to her heart time and time again, I became the student of a generation I knew very little about, and built a friendship with an amazing lady. I really did have something to offer, not by appearing to have it all together, but by opening my heart and my home, with all its imperfections and struggles.*

Mary Beth Adams  
Kansas City, Kansas

Basically, we think this is just everyday life ... and it is. But when we live it with intentionality, we are mentoring ... we just hate calling it that!!!!

**Younger girls don't want to hang out with me!** Total untruth!!!! Because of the way this generation was raised and the pattern of the previous generation, there is a longing to have the influence of an older woman in their life. There are so many young women who have little or no relationship with their mom ... or even if

they have a GREAT relationship with their mom, a lot of the time they aren't living in the same city or even state that their mom lives in.

*I didn't know when I met Mary Beth that the relationship we would come to have would affect me so deeply. There has never been a day that we decided she was my mentor...it was never an assignment or a responsibility. In other words, she was never required to like me. Instead, I've realized as we have gone through life together that she loves me. I'm single and at that twenty-something stage of life where it feels like the world expects me to have everything figured out. I expect it of myself, too. But she doesn't expect it of me. She doesn't have it all figured out either. Instead, as life happens, we take it on together. I never hesitate to call her when the world seems to fall apart. She never hesitates to assure me nothing has fallen apart...that it's just my perspective for the moment. I couldn't ask for more than that. At 25 when life is so up in the air, nothing does more good in my heart than having her tell me I'm alright. I can't express it really...what it means to have someone smile when they see me, hold me when I weep, tell me not to take myself so seriously, look me in the eyes and tell me I'm okay when I don't feel okay. Mary Beth loves me when she doesn't have to. That kind of love changes a person. And I will never be the same.*

*Loisa Wright  
Mission Viejo, CA*

I recently had this conversation with one of the girls I hang out with on a regular basis. She has an amazing, spirit-filled mom, who loves and supports her completely. She lives in the same town as her mom and is very, very close to her. She made this enlightening comment to me. "I love my mom and I have no doubt that she loves me and has my best in mind. But she HAS to love me ... she's my mom! You CHOOSE to love me. There's a difference".

WOW!!!! Out of the mouth of babes!!! There IS a difference when someone chooses to love you. There is nothing comparable to a mother's love, don't misunderstand me! But it is something special when someone who is older and wiser chooses to come along side you, invest in you and love you unconditionally.

**I need to know the Bible better** – NO, you need to be willing and ready to share what you already have learned. Yes, we all need to continue growing and learning. Absolutely! But to decide not to invest in the next generation because we aren't Billy Graham isn't really acceptable! Think about it ... Do you know the Bible better now than you did last year? What about now compared to 2 years ago? Or 5 years ago? If you've attended one or 2 church services, the answer should be yes! Absolutely!!! So share what you know!!!! God has taught you more than you think. We tend to focus on what we don't know more than what we DO know.

A few years ago, we tried to talk my parents into buying a computer. They were in their 60's at the time. There was no way they were going to buy one. Computers were too complex, too complicated, too scary! But they finally succumbed to the ongoing pressure we were dealing out. Once they got one, they started playing around on it. They realized that they knew enough to get started. And once they started, my dad got so excited about the possibilities, that he drove into Austin multiple times for advanced software lessons. The transformation in my parents from absolutely being opposed to owning a computer to not being able to function WITHOUT one, happened within a relatively short period of time. And was awesome to watch!

Here's the point. *They knew enough to get started, they tried, the fear went away.* AND they continued to learn along the way. They use it daily and they'll never go back!

Bottom line --- we don't need to know everything about the bible before we start sharing it with someone else. I know that's an amazing concept!!!! Deep, huh!!! But we all have these thoughts! We think we have to be smarter, wiser, deeper, AND have all of the spiritual gifts and disciplines active and vibrant in our lives before we can start investing in someone else. WRONG!!! Start now! God wants to use you just where you are!!! He'll teach you along the way!!!!

**I don't have any curriculum** - Your life IS your curriculum. Earlier I mentioned that God wants to use 'your experiences ...your successes ...your failures ...your hurts ... your life!! We cover this in depth in the tools section of this guide. But let me assure you, you have plenty of material to use to impact the life of someone else!

**I don't have anything to offer** -- You have everything to offer! You have your time, your love, your laughter, your skills, your experience, your knowledge, your hugs, your tears ... **you!**

Isn't it so typical what Satan puts in our head? I'm not good enough. I don't have anything to offer. I'm not smart enough. 'as soon as I memorize 27 verses of scripture and read the whole new testament, fast for 40 days and attend 18 bible studies ....THEN I'll start mentoring someone!

No! All of those thoughts are just a smokescreen to get you to put off what God wants you to be doing now ... everyday! The thought that we don't have anything to offer is purely from Satan himself. He doesn't necessarily want you to think you're worthless; He just wants to convince you to WAIT. Don't act now because of ... whatever! It doesn't matter what ... *just wait!*

Mentoring is a lifestyle, not a program. It is basically taking the relationships God has put in your life, recognizing the God moments, and intentionally sharing what God has taught you in those moments and circumstances.

So don't believe the Myths. God never asks more of us than we can give. He asks us to give what we have... Nothing more. Nothing less. We just have to be willing to act on the moments that He puts in front of us. We must show what we know. And we must be ready and willing to share what He has done in our lives.

### Change Your Lens

A few years ago (I won't say how many!) I turned 45. I found myself squinting at my computer and realized, "Oh my soul! I think I need some help here!" So I went to the local drug store and bought some reading glasses. About a week later, my husband and I were having a Bible study in our home and when I opened my Bible I realized I couldn't even make out the words on the page. (Evidently the words must have shrunk!) I remembered the reading glasses. I put on the specs, looked at the page and, low and behold... I COULD SEE!!! Hallelujah!

Here's the point ...

***The things that were right in front of me became clear when I was wearing the right lens.***

In the same way that those glasses allowed me to see the words in my Bible and on my computer screen, changing your lens on life can help you to see the young women God has put or is putting in your path.

*When I started seeing 20somethings through a different lens it was like becoming more aware of my surroundings. Kind of like when you buy a new car, you suddenly notice that model of car everywhere you go. Once I changed my lens there were so many opportunities to become friends with and minister to these young women. The check out girl at my supermarket, the girl at the coffee shop- the opportunity for ministry was all around me! It's been a true blessing in my life to have these relationships.*

*Kim Gore  
Ladera Ranch, CA*

### Where Are They?

So where can you find these next generation women? They're all around you! The babysitter, your best friend's daughter, the new college grad at work, a young mother who frequents the park where your kids play... Up to now, these young women have remained in your peripheral vision; noticed, appreciated, maybe even spoken to, but only as casual acquaintances. Change your lens. How could they benefit from a deeper relationship with you? What can you do to take a step in building a more meaningful relationship?

- Treat your babysitter to a special "Thank You" lunch, or coffee (in addition to her regular fee☺). Take some time to get to know her. Ask her what's going on in her life. Does she have another job? Is she in school?
- Does your friend's daughter seem to gravitate towards you? Have you had a significant conversation with her in the past? Go out to coffee. Offer to help her decorate her apartment or house. Find out what she's interested in and make a point to ask her about it; you could find you're interested too!
- Offer some help to your newest colleague. Give her some tips about the ins and outs of the office, and then invite her to lunch.
- Strike up a conversation with the woman at the park. Ask her about her kids and family. Set up a play date for your kids next week.
- Is there a young woman in your class at the gym that you always work out next to? Invite her for a smoothie after your workout.
- Do you know the name of the barista at your local coffee joint? Always be sure to ask how she is, and if she doesn't say "fine" or "good" take the time to follow up. (Don't forget to leave her a tip- she'll remember you!)
- You can also consider getting involved in a ministry at your church that naturally attracts 20somethings. You can volunteer with MOPS, lead a small group for the College & Career ministry, teach a Bible study for newlyweds with your spouse, or go on a mission trip and keep your eye out for a young woman to connect with.
- Does the task seem too big to tackle alone? Get some friends to join in. Together you can plan events to invite 20something women to attend(announce it in your church's bulletin or at college ministry). Host a small cooking class at your home. You can all work together to make dinner and then sit down to a wonderful meal together.

What kind of skill do you have that you could pass on to a group of these young women? Maybe you're great at organization? Or perhaps you are the cooking queen...Do you like to walk dogs or are you an athlete? Whatever it is, I'd be willing to bet that there is a group of 20something women who would *love* to learn from you.

Above all else, the best tool at your disposal is prayer. Pray that God would open your eyes to the women walking in your path every day. And if there are no women in sight, pray and ask God to bring someone. He will be faithful to honor your request.

When I reflect on my life, I see that God has been putting young women and girls in my path all along. As my husband and I moved from church to church through Arkansas, Texas, New Mexico, and California, there were always young women that I hung out with. I never saw myself as their mentor, but as a friend. I see now, that through those friendships I was helping to disciple them. The stories I shared with them and the things they witnessed God doing in my life were helping them to grow in their own relationship with the Lord.

Looking back, I *wish* I had seen those moments through the lens of mentoring. I would have been more intentional to share "God moments", I would have been more intentional when pointing them to Scripture for answers, I would have been bolder when it came to stepping in at crucial times.

Remember, mentoring begins with friendship and is followed by spiritual investment. Like every good relationship, this one will take time to build trust. Stop looking for a ministry project and start looking for an honest, authentic relationship... one from which both of you will learn and benefit!

Look around, take a risk, make the leap, and invite someone to walk with *you* today.



### **Moments, Seasons, Lifetime**

I've learned that there are 3 three different opportunities God gives us to mentor;; in the moments, for a season, and for a lifetime. Every relationship begins with a moment, and for some, that's where it ends. But given some intentional time and energy that moment can blossom into a meaningful relationship. As you begin to change your lens, you'll start to see every interaction as an opportunity.

#### **Mentoring In The Moments:**

True, today the greeting "How are you?" is more a courtesy than an inquiry into the state of someone's well-being, but that one question can open a lot of doors for mentoring moments. Again, it requires a change of lens to see that mentoring does not have to have a long-term commitment to have an impact. But you must be willing to take the extra few minutes to act on the opportunity God puts in front of you. So what does it look like to mentor in the moments?

A few months ago I was trying on some clothes in Target. As I entered the dressing room, I saw a young woman standing in front of the floor length mirror in the hallway, turning from left to right, tilting her head, looking over her shoulder attempting to view her outfit from every possible angle. I could see from the way she was analyzing her attire and practicing different looks in the mirror that this outfit was for something special.

"Those jeans look great on you," I said, in an aim to ease her anxiety just a bit.

"Really?" she questioned. "They're not too tight?"

From there I helped her explore some ensemble options from the clothes she'd brought in to try on. She told me about the young man she was going to see that night, how it was their first date and she'd had a crush on him "like, forever" and how she wanted to pick an outfit that was cute and flirty without being too suggestive. We found the perfect one! When she left she thanked me profusely for my "help" and seemed to be more excited than nervous.

Now I don't know this girl, I never even found out her name. I don't know if she's a Christian or if she goes to church. I'll probably never see her again, but in that moment I saw an opportunity to act in love and I took advantage of it.

*"So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind."*

*1 Thessalonians 5:11 Message*

It was just a moment, seemingly insignificant, but in that moment I was able to communicate Christ's love to a young girl. A girl who was in need of it. In need of encouragement, confidence and a reminder of her beauty. I saw that need and I attempted to meet it, scary as it was to put myself out there like that. Walking away that day, I realized that I left just as encouraged as she did.

Opportunities to communicate God's love and truth will be revealed to you if you ask Him to open your eyes to them. Whether it's with a girl you see everyday at the gym, a waitress at a restaurant you frequent, a check-out girl at the grocery store, someone who takes the same route on the bus or train during your morning commute, or even someone in the next dressing room. Don't waste a chance to connect with someone. You never know who may need just a little encouragement ... and God can use *you* to make that happen!!!

## Mentoring For A Season:

Then there are times when God puts someone in your life for a little longer period of time ... for a season. Maybe college is out for the summer and a young girl starts working in your office for the summer. Or maybe a newlywed joined your Bible Study for the semester. Your kids are out of school and you meet a young lady at the park that you've never noticed before. These events may all have a limited time table, but it also may be a time that God has purposefully put you in the position to be this young woman's friend.

*Without really recognizing my new friend, being 20+ years younger than me, we started enjoying spending time together. It started as a casual acquaintance, but before I knew it, she was seeking me out. I realized God had planted her in my life and me in hers for a reason.*

*Mentor sounds like such a big status name but I guess that's what I am to her... I have walked where she hasn't yet walked, I have lived a life as a wife and mother that she hasn't yet lived.*

*Lindsey spends time with my family, as if she is one of us. One of my favorite memories with Lindsey is having her over to my home and teaching her how to make coconut cream pies. We had so much fun!*

*She went to college and I wasn't able to see her as much. But while she was there we emailed and called to keep in touch. When she came home to visit, she always let me know she was in town so we could connect. She has actually moved back from College and will be attending school locally now, so I am looking forward to many days ahead of walking beside her as God leads both of us in life. Not only am I excited to see how God will work through me to help Lindsey, but I am also thrilled to see how God will work through Lindsey to speak to me. I pray our walk together will honor the Lord.*

*Sharla Ward  
Amarillo, TX*

Sometimes we think that mentoring has to be this long, ongoing relationship, and sometimes it is. But sometimes, people enter our lives for short periods of time. Those short, seemingly insignificant connections could, very possibly, highly impact that young woman's life.

Once you've started seeing the people God puts in your path differently, you will see the opportunities He puts in front of you. We won't know the length of time we're suppose to be 'something' to those people. We just need to be obedient and intentional in the moment and let God do the rest!

When I think of mentoring in the seasons of my life, personally, I think of 2 different events that happened concurrently. It was our first pastorate in Danville, Arkansas... population 813. (Yes, that was the whole town.) So let me set the scene. Lance and I had been married 5 years and just finished seminary at Criswell Seminary in Dallas. We moved from Dallas, Texas (big city) to Danville, Arkansas (total country) on 5 acres of land behind the church. That 5 acres was surrounded by chicken farms. Living on acreage vs. living in a neighborhood is very different. Isolation is ever present. I didn't know a soul except the people at the church, and I didn't really know them... yet. My family lived 12 hours away in south Texas. Our church ran about 50 people. I was pregnant with Jonathan, my first born. So basically I was totally clueless about everything from being a pastor's wife at our first church, country life, motherhood, and dealing with isolation ... it was quite a change to say the least.

During those 6 years, 2 women took me under their wing, Sandra Moudy and Doris Majors. Sandra had kids that ranged in age from 4-8 years old. She immediately befriended me. We hung out at her house all of the time and she helped me through the 'baby' times. She showed me where shopping centers were and where to find the best deals on baby clothes. She helped me with discipline issues. I watched her with her kids. She loved them desperately, but was firm and consistent with them. She loved her husband and he loved her. She let me see the times when she was frustrated with him. She let me know how they resolved their conflict. It was an amazing and needed time of learning for me as a new mom and young wife.

Then there was Doris. She was a little farther down the path than Sandy. She was more of a grandma to my son, Jonathan. But what I remember about our relationship, was she was always teaching me something. She taught me how to can pickles and to bake bread. She was always 'putting up' something which I figured out meant canning something. She was a true Proverbs 31 woman. She was always busy. She was working with her husband in their business, or she was working in her garden, or in her kitchen. She always had time for me when I would call her up with a canning question or she would say, 'Why don't you just come over and I'll show you?' WOW! I loved that!

But what both of these women probably don't realize is the spiritual influence they had on me. They both truly lived out their faith daily. Both Sandy and Doris loved the Lord and it showed up in the everyday things they did. And as I walked with them through everyday life, I saw Jesus in their life. They shared stories of what Christ had done in their lives. I watched them as they'd look up the scripture that had touched them that day and read it to me. They were Jesus with skin on for a season of time... a crucial season of life for me!

At the same time Sandy and Doris were mentoring me, God put Debbie in my life. I was only 25 at the time and she was in high school. She started going to our church and we struck up a friendship. She would drop by the house and help me with Jonathan (my newborn at the time). She helped me fold clothes and cook supper. But during the years we were in Arkansas, Debbie had some tragic things happen in her life and she turned to us for answers. The answers she wanted, we couldn't give her. We didn't give her the cliché answers that come so easily. 'Everything happens for the good', 'God's timing is perfect', 'We don't see what He sees', 'They're in a better place'. No! We loved and supported her through these times. We cried with her and held her when she needed someone. We tried to help her family when they were hurting. Our words were basically meaningless during those times, but our actions were priceless.

I haven't talked to or seen any of these women for years, but they were all instrumental early on in my life. I don't think any of us would have thought that what we were doing was mentoring. But I can say, without a doubt ... it was! They all helped me see how mentoring at the most elementary level, can be so deeply effective.

Maybe we're suppose to be just an encouragement in the moment, or maybe we're suppose to be a friend for a season. We don't know how long the season will be for, the point is to be obedient. Be who God wants you to be for however long He wants you to be. The young woman you see may only be in your life for a few weeks, months, or maybe a year, but what rubs off on her in that time period may be life changing. You may be the first authentic Christian she's ever met. You may be the first person who's had a meaningful conversation with her since she's moved there. Or maybe she's just having a tough time in general and has no one to process with. When you make yourself available to listen, hear and give personal, God honoring advice, you are being Jesus with skin on.

*"He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God is there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of his healing comfort- we get a full measure of that, too."*

2 Corinthians 1: 3-5 MSG

Think of all the experiences you've had in your life: the good and the bad. Did you go to college, get married, have children, move to a new town, or begin a new job? Did you battle depression, battle an illness, get into debt, lose a parent, a friend, or a child, lose a job, struggle with infertility, go through a breakup or get divorced? Women in their twenties are facing similar things, and hearing your story, how you got through it, hearing what God taught you through it and continues to teach you can help them. Just having your support can be a tremendous help to them. Whether you handled these seasons with grace or made some royal mistakes, you have something of value to share with the next generation.

### **Mentoring For A Lifetime:**

Let me start by saying that lifetime mentoring relationships are few and far between... even rare. But when you take the time to recognize and cultivate them, they are invaluable ... for her AND you!

Cathi is one of these relationships in my life. We don't meet every week or go through studies together. But we have a long-term relationship that is ongoing..

In the 7 some-odd years that I've known Cathi, she has watched me go through all sorts of seasons and events- a lifetime's worth, in fact. She's been alongside me through some of life's most pivotal moments. She was there when my daughter graduated high school, and when my son moved out, and for both of their weddings. She watched and prayed with my husband and me as we made life-changing decisions regarding work and ministry. She's seen the whole gamut of my emotions; my best and my worst. She's seen me make choices in the flesh and when I've set myself in the center of God's will. Together we've belly laughed and had difficult discussions, some resulting in tears.

Just like any relationship, ours has changed and evolved over time. She's grown in her confidence and ability to make wise choices on her own. While she doesn't run everything by me, I know that our relationship is helping her to make these decisions. When I listen to Cathi talk, there are phrases she uses and things she says that I know she has picked up from listening to and walking with me. I know she sees marriage and family differently because she has watched my marriage and my family. I know she sees ministry differently because of what she's seen in our lives. I've seen God work in her life as she's seen Him work in *my* life. But she never would have seen Him in my life if I hadn't *let her* into my life. As we've walked together she's seen that my relationship with Christ is real, not just words or a Sunday morning outing.

Mentoring for a lifetime means simply making your life available.

It means intentionally investing enough time in and with someone that it shapes her for a lifetime. Allowing someone to observe and even participate in the ins and outs of marriage, parenting, and career, and coupling that with a knowledge of God to ensure that they have the wisdom and experience to make wise choices in their own life, *whether you're with them or not*. I believe that Cathi and I will be in each other's lives for the long haul, but if that were to change, I'm confident that she's seen enough of my life to carry her through whatever comes her way.

Mentoring is not a commitment to a length of time; it's a commitment to a way of life. So if someone comes into your life for a moment, seize that moment. If someone comes into your life for a season, relish that time, and if God blesses you with a lifelong friend and companion, dive in and open your life to her. You won't be sorry you did!

*I don't think anybody ever told me I was going to be Ryanne's mentor. There was no official start to our relationship. It started off and continues to be very casual. She was a student in our youth ministry and I was an adult leader. Truth is I liked her and wanted to spend more time with her. She was fun, energetic and well...a freshman in high school. She and her friends reminded me of what I was like in high school.*

*As time passed our relationship grew and we began to invite each other into the events of our personal lives. Some were very exciting like her senior prom; others were just everyday life, like shopping at Target for home decorations for my new house. We just began "to do life" with one another. I told her about what was happening in my life and would ask her what was happening in her life. I made an effort to celebrate the moments in her life that I remembered marked who I was and had become. Things like getting her driver's license, going away to college, birthdays, boyfriends...all the things that life revolves around when you are young. In the midst of these moments I would look for ways and find opportunities to encourage and challenge her faith.*

*As the years passed my life was changing; I was getting married, having babies, God was at work in my life in big and little ways and through it all, I would share with Ryanne what I was learning. I would share what was hard (maybe because of mistakes from my past) and what was rewarding because of some good habits and boundaries I had put in place. All of this was modeling my faith and spiritual journey to Ryanne and little did I know it was shaping her as well.*

*Last year Ryanne got married and I had the privilege of being her Matron of Honor. As I was thinking about the significant role she was allowing me to play in her wedding, I couldn't help but think of the significant role she had been playing in my life. She had become like a little sister to me, someone whom I loved very much, someone who I wanted to protect, someone who I wanted to encourage, spend time with, journey with and experience life and faith with. Ryanne and I have become more than friends, she is part of my family and hopefully will be part of my life forever.*

Jana Sarti  
Foothill Ranch, CA

The young woman Jana was investing in is now my daughter-in-law. Was Jana's investment valuable? I would say, absolutely!

*I wasn't looking for someone to pour into my life. It just happened. Jana was someone I had crossed paths with that was a little bit older and showed interest in my life and decisions. She never told me how to make a decision, but she always shared with me what life lessons she had learned. The most important thing was that she chose to "do life" with me. She chose to let me in the ins and outs of her everyday life. It started with us going out to lunch, and soon we were spending all kinds of time together. Usually whatever we were doing wasn't super exciting...walking down the aisles at the grocery store, driving to the airport to pick up a friend of hers...but it was always filled with great conversations and lots of laughter. Soon it seemed like we made memories no matter what we were doing. We could be sitting on the couch watching TV or going on a road trip but either way we were together!*

*Sometimes Jana had to speak truth into my life that I didn't want to hear or that hurt my feelings, but it always came down to her having a similar experience and wanting to save me from making any unnecessary mistakes. Even though it may not have happened in that exact moment, there was always forgiveness and explanation – and our bond became stronger!*

*Then out of the blue I had an "ah ha" moment where I realized after many years of friendship and mentorship Jana had become my family. The funny thing is it had seemed like it was always that way, and I wasn't sure if it had ever been any different. Nowadays we are on much more of a friend level, but Jana has played many roles in my life: mentor, big sister, boss, and landlord! I am still learning from Jana everyday. She is still allowing me to peer into her life as she is a wife, a mom, a daughter, an aunt, and a strong Christian woman! And last year, just as I had taken a part in her wedding – I made sure the day that I said "I do" she was standing right next to me as my Matron of Honor (even if she was nine months pregnant!). It is so exciting to be able to be in a new chapter of my life knowing that Jana is looking out for me, praying for me, and loving on me and my husband whenever she can. I can't imagine "doing life" with out her!*

*Ryanne Witt  
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA*

The bottom line is this ... Be aware of those God puts in your life ... and He WILL send someone into your life, If it just for a moment, seize that moment. If it is for a season, recognize the opportunity and relish that time. And if God blesses you with a lifelong friend and companion, dive in and open your life to her. You won't be sorry you did!

## Why? The Bible Tells Me So!

So, why is *lifestyle mentoring* the mentoring model for the next generation? First, it is the model that the next generation will respond to. Relationship vs. Program. But 2ndly, and more importantly, because throughout all of Scripture this model is exhibited. From Moses to Joshua, Paul to Timothy, and most importantly from Jesus to his followers; the older generations pass along the stories of God's love, His Word, and His faithfulness to the younger generations. It is not only modeled, but commanded.

And in Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 20-24 (MSG)

*“Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only! Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night. Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates...*

*The next time your child asks you, "What do these requirements and regulations and rules that GOD, our God, has commanded mean?" tell your child, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and GOD powerfully intervened and got us out of that country. We stood there and watched as GOD delivered miracle-signs, great wonders, and evil-visitations on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his household. He pulled us out of there so he could bring us here and give us the land he so solemnly promised to our ancestors. That's why GOD commanded us to follow all these rules, so that we would live reverently before GOD, our God, as he gives us this good life, keeping us alive for a long time to come."*

Let's take a deeper look at this:

*“Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only! Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children.”*

As Israel is being established as a nation (a pivotal point in God's story) God gives them this command. He does not reserve it for Moses on top of Mt. Sinai, or for Aaron and those in the priesthood (the pastors and leaders of the church so to speak). No, God addresses the nation of Israel, ALL who had seen His mighty works in freeing them from Egypt. The tent makers, the mothers, the carpenters, the shepherds-ALL who had partaken in His goodness in the desert. They all had a story to tell, just as you have a story to tell of God's goodness in your life.

*“Talk about them **wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night.** Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.”*

From the time you wake until you fall asleep at night your life is a testimony to Christ's work. As you drive to Costco, when you're playing with your kids, eating dinner with your family; all of these times are opportunities to pass along your faith experience with someone. Perhaps that someone wasn't blessed to grow up in a Christian home, or maybe they just need a new perspective on God and the Christian life. *Wherever you are*, whatever you are doing, the opportunity is there for 'God moments' to happen. You just have to recognize them and be ready to respond in those moments.

*“...tell your child, "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and GOD powerfully intervened and got us out of that country. We stood there and watched as GOD delivered miracle-signs, great wonders, and evil-visitations on Egypt, on Pharaoh and his household. He pulled us out of there so he could bring us here and give us the land he so solemnly promised to our ancestors. That's why GOD commanded us to follow*

*all these rules, so that we would live reverently before GOD, our God, as he gives us this good life, keeping us alive for a long time to come."*

Don't wait for Sunday morning, don't rely on a Bible study, no need to wait for the DVD curriculum, or enroll in seminary. Your greatest teaching tool is your life, your story of God's salvation. What better evidence do we have? What stronger testimony to His commandments than when we are obedient and we experience his goodness? Or when we are disobedient and we experience his grace and forgiveness? Don't underestimate the work that God has done in your life, or the power of your story. The women you mentor will feel closer to you *and* closer to the Lord as a result of you passing it on. They will believe because they've seen Christ in you. They will believe because they've heard the stories you've told them of Christ's faithfulness in your life. They will believe because they continue to see Christ working in and through you as they walk with you through life.

### **Jesus Mentored in the Moments**

Now, consider the ministry of Jesus. He took the time to mentor in the moments, the seasons, and the lifetimes. He never seemed to be too busy to 'notice' a person or the need of a person.

He seized the opportunity to speak to the woman at the well. John 4 recounts the story of Jesus taking a detour through Samaria.

"Jesus, worn out by the trip, sat down at the well. It was noon." 4:6

As the woman he met there drew him some water to drink, Jesus wasted no time.

"If you knew the generosity of God and who I am, you would be asking *me* for a drink, and I would give you fresh and living water...Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again and again. Anyone who drinks the water I give will never thirst- not ever. The water I give will be an artesian spring within, gushing fountains of endless life."

This woman was a known adulteress. Jesus was tired and thirsty. But he didn't let these things get in the way of passing along his knowledge of God's love and the life He had available to this hurting woman.

And how about Mary and Martha, the time he was teaching and the paralytic was lowered through the roof and He healed him. What about Zaccheus and Nicodemus? What about the woman who touched His robe? Jesus stopped and recognized her faith. He stopped and noticed....in the moment!

### **Jesus Mentored in the Seasons.**

Jesus' ministry as a whole was basically a season. It was only 3 years. But during those 3 years, he spent time with people... both momentarily and extensively. His entire life was punctuated with stories. He took the time to talk with people. He listened and cared. He used parables to get a point across. He told stories to masses and individuals. And when people heard Him speak, they were so moved, they told others of what they had heard and learned.

The disciples were so convinced of his deity that they all died for Him. And it's all recorded for us to learn from ... and pass on!

### **And Jesus Mentored for a Lifetime. ...**

Jesus relished the time he spent with his disciples. They ate together, traveled together, prayed together, and wept together. Throughout the 3 years of Jesus' ministry, he lived with these younger men, passing along his knowledge of the Kingdom, teaching them the ways of the Lord, and empowering them to do ministry in the community. The disciples watched Jesus' ministry so closely that they were able to continue the work that he started after His death and

resurrection, proclaiming the coming of the Kingdom and salvation for all those who called on the His name. How did they know how to heal the sick? To cast out demons? By watching and learning from their teacher, Jesus.

**14 He appointed twelve <sup>la</sup> that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach Mark 3:14**

He spent enough time with his disciples so that they saw the authenticity in His life and His passion for His Father. They saw Him laugh and cry, heal the sick, care for the hurting, laugh with friends, and cry in anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane. They saw him play with the children and eat dinner with a tax collector! They saw him minister to a prostitute and hang out with fishermen. They watched Him live out the things He was trying to teach them. And because of His love for His Father, and the 'realness' in which He loved each of them, they took on His characteristics and His mission. They saw His deity up close and personal.

Which leads me to this thought; this is bigger than you. Mentoring is more than cooking lessons, child rearing tips, and a shopping buddy, though all of those things are truly important. Mentoring is about passing on the story of your life, with God as the central character. True, there will be times when He doesn't feel central. He may feel distant and at times non-existent. It may seem that you, your problems or your fears have taken center stage. But no matter what your 'feeling' about Him is in the moment, you must realize that communicating an ever-increasing desire to draw close to Him, depend on Him and trust Him regardless of our 'feelings' is a message the next generation desperately needs to hear.

**2 You have heard me teach in front of many witnesses. Pass on to men you can trust the things you've heard me say. Then they will be able to teach others also.2 Timothy 2:2 NIRV**

The values, history and stories of God were passed on life to life. They were passed on as people walked down the road with their kids. They were passed on as they were sitting around the fire at night, drinking coffee (or whatever they drank!). Stories of God's miracles, stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, stories of captivity, deliverance, famine, and feast, all were passed on from families to tribes to the nation of Israel until the time of Jesus. And after the resurrection stories of Christ's healing and miracles, his grace, and the forgiveness available through him were passed on by the disciples, shaping the Christian world with their eyewitness accounts of the long-awaited Messiah, passed from generation to generation until the story reached your ears.

The story is not over. Each of us has a chapter to contribute, and most importantly, to pass on. These stories will touch the lives and hearts of future generations, if only we'd be willing to share what God has done in us. *That* is what mentoring is today; sharing the story of God and how he's worked in our life with those He puts in our path.



**What do I have to offer?**

What a loaded question! You have so much to offer and, if you're like me, you don't even realize it. .

***Your Experiences –***

Sharing your experiences, your story, with younger women is the key to relationship. Throughout the Bible, God instructed people to tell their children stories. Jesus continuously talked to and communicated with people through stories. He taught his disciples as they walked down the road.

Remember –

***You impress from a distance, but you impact up close and personal.***

Think of all the experiences you've had in your life: the good and the bad, that younger women could learn from. Did you go to college, get married, have children, move to a new town, or begin a new job? Did you battle depression, battle an illness, get into debt, lose a parent, a friend, or a child, lose a job, struggle with infertility, go through a breakup or get divorced? Women in their twenties are facing similar things, and hearing your story, how you got through it, hearing what God taught you through it and continues to teach you can help them. Just having your support can be a tremendous help to them. Whether you handled these seasons with grace or made some royal mistakes, you have something of value to share with the next generation.

God can speak to others through the experiences, the successes, failures, the loves and hurts you've gone through in your life. Through your spiritual journey!

Ask yourself, how did I get to be who I am today?

Who were the people that were most influential in my life?

For a moment? Season? Lifetime?

What were the big, major events that changed the direction my life was going in?

For the good or bad?

***Successes –***

Sharing the successes in your life gives hope to the next generation. Even if the path to the success was hard and filled with pot-holes, that story, in itself, holds encouragement to the next generation.

***Failures --***

Sharing failures with the next generation helps make us real. It helps them see that our life that might appear relatively great or successful has had ups and downs. It also shows them that there have been potholes in the path that led you to where you are today. Hearing your story, all of it, good AND bad, helps them to realize that it's not the end of the world when THEY fail. It's part of the journey. AND it makes us who we are. It is what God uses to shape us into who He wants us to be.

***Hurts –***

Life doesn't always turn out the way we think. Things happen ... some joyous, some difficult, some seemingly unbearable. But the fact remains that God is faithful to bring us through even the most trying of times, and does so that we might pass on news of his faithfulness to others.

***“He comes alongside us when we go through hard times, and before you know it, he brings us alongside someone else who is going through hard times so that we can be there for that person just as God is there for us. We have plenty of hard times that come from following the Messiah, but no more so than the good times of his healing comfort- we get a full measure of that, too.”***

***2 Corinthians 1: 3-5 MSG***

God can use your hurts to show others your vulnerability. Being vulnerable with someone is the quickest way for them to become vulnerable with you. The more you give emotionally, the more you get in return. The more you share, the more people will open up to you. To help the next generation, you must be willing to come clean and show that you have been on the hurting end of things. You can't keep the 'everything is fabulous!' face on all the time.

***Spiritual Journey –***

So how will they see Christ in my life? By sharing with them the journey that God has brought you on; the story he's telling through your life. This is where the rubber meets the road.

These are the things you share with those God puts in your path. See? You definitely have much more to share with others than you think! God has taught you tons of things! He's given you lots of opportunity to learn. You just need to recognize when God gives you the opportunity to share those moments with others, and act on it.

***So this is your curriculum.*** Your Experiences, Successes, Failures, Hurts and your Spiritual Journey. These are the things that impact other people. These are the things that will impact the next generation. Your life, touching other lives!

So let's get specific!

**Think about it ...**

The following is a culmination of questions to help you think of the things, skills, people and events God has given you or put in your life. Sometimes it's hard to think of things that God can use in your life. Use these questions and 'nudges' to think through your journey and see how God has used the things you've gone through to make you who you are today. Then take those experiences and pass them on. We encourage you to write down your findings. You will be encouraged and blessed when you look back over your notes and see how God has worked in your life! So get out a pen, and let's begin!

**Successes –**

What are some things that God has given YOU the ability to do?

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What are things you just have a knack for?

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What things do you LOVE to do?

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What are things that you are good at?

- Job/Career
  - Artsy / Creative
  - Listening
  - Encouraging
  - Painting ... houses!
  - Setting a budget
  - Cleaning
- 
- 
- 

Are there things you have done that would be considered achievements? Sports? Awards?

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What have you physically done that you consider accomplishments? Marathon? Flip a house? Organized your closet?

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Can you fold laundry well???? You'd be surprised how many 20somethings can't fold laundry!

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**Failures –**

Are there things in your life that have shaped you because of failure?

- Marriage
  - Relationship
  - School
  - Job
  - Ministry
  - Financially
- 
-

What are some things that have been painful experiences that have shaped your life?  
Loss of a child? Spouse? Parent?

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What are some choices that you've made in the past that you'd like a 'do-over' on?

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### **Hurts –**

How have you been hurt in the past?

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Who hurt you?

- Employers
- Friends
- Family

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How did that affect your 'trust-0- meter'?

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How did that affect your faith?

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Have you got over and through that? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you still dealing with it? \_\_\_\_\_

What did you learn from that experience? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you deal with that person?

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DID you deal with it at all? If so, did you do it in the right way?

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Do you wish you would have done something different? \_\_\_\_\_

If not, do you think it was best NOT to deal with it? Why or why not?

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How has this experience affected your relationships since then?

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Have you been hurt in the 'relationship' department? (love?)

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How did that affect you? \_\_\_\_\_

How did you deal with it? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider yourself a romantic or a realist? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the pros and cons of each? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a relationship now? \_\_\_\_\_

How's that going .... Really? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Spiritual Journey –**

So looking back over the topics that we've covered thus far, where do you see God's hand? Ask these question:

- How did God help you through the experiences?

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- What did you learn through those experiences?

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- What spiritual lessons did you learn during those times?

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- How did you learn those spiritual lessons? Through people, Scripture, a song, sermon, prayer? All of the above?

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- What experiences made you turn to God or draw closer to Him?

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- When did you feel distant from God? \_\_\_\_\_

- What is your relationship with God right now? Honestly? \_\_\_\_\_

- Are you going through a spiritually dry patch? \_\_\_\_\_

- How does that feel? \_\_\_\_\_

- What is he teaching you right now?

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- What softens your heart toward him? People, music, nature, solitude? \_\_\_\_\_
- How is Christ working in you now?

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Along with what God has taught you through the experiences in your life, think about this...

- How many sermons you've heard and Bible studies you have attended.
- How many retreats have you gone to?
- How many times have you had a quiet time?
- What has God taught you in those times?
- How did he speak to you?
- What about prayer?
- How has God answered your prayers?
- What is a specific prayer that you KNOW God answered?

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- How do you know that? Did he say no?

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- How did he confirm His answer in you heart?

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God used all of these things to shape you into who you are today. And He will continue to shape you. So use what He's taught you to impact someone He has put in your path. Maybe your journey will help her to keep from falling into a huge pothole on *her* path.

**Your Calendar ---**

Most mentoring studies have you set a specific day and time to meet every week. Although this has been extremely successful in the past, 20somethings are wired very differently. They have short attention spans and are more apt to do something on the fly than on a planned schedule.

The answer is mentoring 'as you go'. When God puts a young woman in your life, instead of meeting her every week at the coffee bar, take her along with you. When you start thinking in these terms, everything is a ministry moment. These are the times when she watches you. When your 2 year old throws a conniption fit in the middle of Target, how do you respond? When you get the phone call that you need an appointment with a teacher. She watches you when your husband calls and asks you to do him 'a favor' which takes an hour and a half out of your day and puts you that much further behind. These are the 'life moments' where she watches how you live out your Christian walk.

These are also the times when the conversations come up about struggles she's having. How does she deal with her temptation? What should she do about a relationship? How should she go about addressing an issue? These conversations don't happen at church. They happen as relationships go deeper and trust is built. As you let them in, they will let you in.

This is an awesome concept when you think about it! You don't have to add another thing to your schedule, you can get your 'to do' list done, AND you can mentor in the process. It's the way Christ did it!

He was never too busy to speak to someone in need.

So we've included a couple 'mock' schedules. Look at each calendar with the question '*Could I take someone with me to do this?*' Use this calendar as an example to start thinking of ways you can have someone come along side and watch you 'as you go'.

### *Calendar with 9-5 Career/Job*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 6-7:30 Dinner 8-10 Favorite TV Night	7-8 Gym 9-5 Work 6 – 9 Dinner and a Movie	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 12 – 1 Meet friend for Lunch 6-7 Dinner	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 6-7 Dinner 8-10 Favorite TV Night	7-8 Gym 9-5 Office 7-9 Theatre	9- Walk the Lake 10-1 Errands & Lunch 5:30-7 Cook my Favorite Dinner	8:30-1 Church & Lunch 2-5 BarBO w/Friends

### *Calendar of Stay at Home Mom/Gal*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9-10 Gym 10-11:30 Laundry/ Housework 12-1 Lunch 3:30-4 Pick up Kids 6-7 Dinner w/Family 7:30-8:30 Kids finish Homework and Bed	8 Drop Kids 1:30 Pedicure 2:30 Grocery Store 3:30 Pick up kids 4:30 Soccer Practice	7:30 Gym 12 Lunch 1:00 Hair Appt 3:30 Pick up Kids 7:30 Kids finish up hw and bed	9:00 Shopping & Lunch 3:30 Kids 7:30 kids HW and bed	7:30 Gym 9- Laundry & Clean House 12-Lunch 3:30 Kids 4- Take kids for ice cream and park 6-Dinner & Movie	10- Yard Work 12- Lunch 1:30 Soccer Game 5- Family B'day Party	9:30- Church & Lunch 1- Walk 2:30- Movie during sports 6- Dinner w/ Family

Look at your own calendar and start looking for opportunities to have someone come along side and live life with you 'as you go'!



**Things to Do Together: Put a check mark by the possibilities you could implement.**

1. Take a walk.
2. Go to the gym.
3. Pick up your kids from school.
4. Go to the park with your kids.
5. Grab a cup of coffee.
6. Go to lunch.
7. Do you need to bake cupcakes for your kids' class? Do it together!
8. Go shopping.
9. Help her decorate her apartment.
10. Teach her to cook your dinner specialty.
11. Have an at home movie night.
12. Go to the movies.
13. Join a Bible study together.
14. Go to church together.
15. Meet her on her lunch break.
16. Watch your and/or her favorite show.
17. Go to a bookstore.
18. Help her plan a special night for the special someone in her life.
19. Go to the pet store (who doesn't love puppies?!)
20. Celebrate holidays.
21. Go to the grocery store.
22. Do you need a house sitter? Why not ask her?
23. Show up for their special events.
24. Try out a new restaurant together
25. Join a ministry together.
26. Get a pedicure.
27. Go to a sporting event.
28. Go to the airport together.
29. Family days ... Take her along!
30. Have her over in the evenings ... let her watch what reality is!
31. Have her over if she has an afternoon off
32. Take her magazines and chicken soup when she's sick
33. If she needs to meet with her friends and they can't find a place, offer your home.
34. Help her clean her apartment
35. Surprise her with little gifts you know she loves! (even if they're out of your comfort zone!)

**Are you technologically challenged?**

1. Have her teach you how to text message...
2. Do you have an iPod? Get one! They are awesome! Then have her teach you how to use it.
3. Download music that she likes and talk about the genre.
4. Ask her what a genre is! ☺
5. Ask her about starting a blog! Your family could have a blog where anyone in your family could add to it!
6. Do you need some help with your computer? Ask her!
7. Talk to her about the perks and dangers of MySpace

### Marks of Mentoring –

These 8 things are basically the foundation of mentoring the next generation. They are the '8 commandments' of mentoring ... so to speak! They aren't hard or time consuming, but without them, you will be ineffective.

- **You must be authentic** – BE REAL -- Earlier I talked about what type of people we all are more comfortable being around ... those with flaws or those that have got everything totally together. But which ever category you are in, the flawed or unflawed, the main thing you have to be is REAL. You must be who you are. The lovely AND unlovely. The happy or sad, contemplative or mad... whatever. Be what you are. Now, you may need to go back and fess up to not acting Christ-like in moments. But those are great teaching times on tons of levels. They may have never seen someone our age apologizing to someone their age. They may have never seen anyone apologize ... period! It gives you great conversation about what you should have done, how Jesus would have reacted. It will show her you can still be a Christian, love the lord and screw up!
- **Listen and Learn** – We don't have to have all the answers. In fact, we don't have to have hardly any of the answers. But we must learn to listen. Listen and hear what they are saying. There may be an underlying guilt or anger issue. There might be some family issues or sexual issues. They need someone to talk to. Some have no one to talk with except people their own age. While that is helpful, it isn't always good advice. And some definitely don't want to talk with their parents. Be sensitive to know when you need to seek help. Don't get in over your head. If there are issues that are beyond your scope of advice, volunteer to go with her to meet with a counselor. In fact, in our center section, there is a list of things that are helpful to know about the girls you invest in. This list will help you know their background better so you will be able to understand where they're coming from and pray for them in a clearer more specific way.
- **Confidentiality** – This is a non-negotiable. This generation is adult wary anyway. They definitely do not need to confide in an adult only to have that person turn around and tell someone else. If you feel there is an issue that you need help with input, ask her if it would be okay for you to get some advice from a couple of other people. She will be so grateful that you asked her and will give you more chips in her eyes.
- **Ask the right questions.** Bill Hybels asks the question, 'How are you ... really?'. That's a great question! Learn to listen. Be sure that you are talking less than she is. Be sure that you are listening more. Try to truly hear what she is saying. What is her underlying tone or attitude? Is there more to this story? Is she carrying baggage into this decision or conflict? Ask questions to help her see what is really going on and so she can figure out what the right response to an issue is.

Asking questions is the quickest way to get to know someone. People love to talk about themselves. But remember, Bridgers are already a little skiddish when it comes to 'their elders'. But having someone in the boomer generation be genuinely interested in them is inviting. The key word here is 'genuinely'. So when cultivating a relationship with the next generation, the gift of listening is invaluable.

- **Encouragement is key** ... Always, always encourage. If you think the decision she is planning on making is not the right one, then address the issue. But at the end of the conversation, make sure she knows that you love her and support HER even if you disagree with her decision. The bottom line is don't judge her. Love her. You can disapprove of what she does without disapproving of her. So love her through it all ... good and bad. No matter what. Encouragement goes a long way with this generation ... and to be honest, with ALL generations. We all like to be encouraged. We like to be valued. So tell her when she's doing a good job. Tell her when you realize she is making great decisions. Tell her when you see her confronting issues and people in a different, better way than she did a year ago. Tell her when you see changes happening in her life. How awesome to hear that from someone who loves you and you love them back
- **Pick your battles** ... play your chips when needed – I have the picture in my head of a stack of poker chips. We keep collecting them as relationships progress and then there comes a day when you need to cash a few in. These are the days that you see some bad choices or an attitude that has crept up. This is the time to play your chips. You know the old song, 'You got to know when to hold'em and know when to fold'em. The same

goes for mentoring relationships. There are times that you have to listen, hear, tell them what you've learned in your life and what God has taught you through similar circumstances. But then there is the Yellow or even Red Flag that is waving frantically in the wind. These are the times where you play your chips. You've earned the right to speak into her life. You're seeing warning signs or danger flags all around a situation. This is the time where you pray hard, suck it up, and lay down your hand. These moments are few and far between. But they are also times when God calls you to be Him with skin on. Who will tell her what she needs to hear if you don't tell her? Pick your battles wisely. If the battle is she wants a tattoo, that's not a hill to die on. But if she's thinking about moving in with her boyfriend or starting to get swept up into a bad crowd. That's a battlefield worth dying on. Don't mother her, or judge her. Just love her but tell her truth.

- **Look for the God moments** – While you're on the journey with her there will be all kinds of moments. Moments filled with fun, laughter, sadness and tears. Be aware in the midst of the times when to add the God moments'. The perfect time to interject something God has taught you in your life. An event or memory where God moved powerfully in you and taught you something in that time. Even in the midst of disciplining your kids, she can see the way a Christian family should operate. And if you screw up in that area, you can talk to her about that too. There are God moments in every happening. We just need to be aware of them and ready to act on them.
- **Be the initiator** --Throughout scripture there are passages where we are instructed to 'teach the next generation.'<sup>8</sup> It never says, 'wait until they come to you ...then teach them!' That's why this shift in thinking is so important. We need to be the one who keeps looking for those God puts in our path. We need to be aware of the God moments and act on them. We need to look through the lens of 'I want to be your friend,' not 'I want to disciple you.'

I've been looking through the scriptures, and can't find one time that a mentoring/discipleship relationship was initiated by the mentee. You could maybe make the case for Elijah calling Elisha in 1 Kings 19. But other than that ... the mentor is always the initiator. Yes, there were MOMENTS of mentoring that were definitely initiated through a circumstance or a short contact by a younger mentee type person., But when it comes to extended relationships, they were always initiated by the person who had been around the block a few times.

Examples? Paul chose Timothy, Moses chose Joshua, Jesus chose his disciples, except for Andrew and he was a referral! This would make a great Bible study<sup>9</sup>. Mentoring relationships of the Bible! The point is WE need to change our lens and start initiating relationships with the younger generation.

- **Keep your own walk fresh** -- As you start on this journey, you'll realize that you will grow as much or more as the young woman God has put in your life. God will start teaching you things and start opening your eyes to different perspectives. You'll find the word starts taking on a different perspective. You start reading it with 'her' in mind. And how you can minister to her ... and others God will put in your path in the future. So read, have quiet times, stay current, keep up with trends, but most importantly – stay in the word...daily! God will speak to you ... and **THROUGH** you!

*I adore my three boys, but sometimes I just needed to hang out with a girl. Despite our age difference, Meagan and I have a lot in common. We both like chick flicks, creative things, Mexican food and shopping. Our shared love of ice cream sealed the bond. She made my life more fun. I loved going with her to movies, out to eat and shopping at "Dead Betty's", that funky thrift shop. It was really fun!*

*I am such an introvert by nature, and tend to stand back from life and observe. Meagan has always been a bright spot in my life. My boys loved having her around, and she seemed to fit right in with our family. Whatever we were doing was fine with her. Whatever we were having for dinner was fine with her. I always liked that she never used the front*

<sup>8</sup> Scripture passages here ... Woman at the well, Disciples, Paul & Timothy,

<sup>9</sup> Psalm 48:11-13, Ps. 71:17-18; Ps. 78:1-6; Ps. 102:18; Is. 38:19; Joel 1:3;

door, but used the garage door, just like my family. She enjoys life and her enthusiasm rubs off. Being around her has inspired me to get out of my comfort zone, and jump into life.

I see in her a heart for people. She values others. She takes time out of her life to hang out. I have always felt whenever I see her, that I am not interrupting her life, but that she is really glad to see me. That makes me feel special. She is approachable. People of all ages like her

Meagan and I had the opportunity to go to Africa together. While we were there, we went into villages and immediately Meagan was surrounded by dozens of kids who wanted her attention. I stood back, rather overwhelmed by it all. She jumped in and started holding hands, and holding kids and interacting with everyone. She spent the trip showing God's love, to people who desperately needed it. She is an inspiration. I loved sharing that amazing trip with her.

I have been able to see Meagan walk through her teenage years. And Connie, I have also watched you allow Meagan the freedom to make choices and allow her to be who she is. I have seen your relationship with her, and how you have spent time with her and talked to her, and now I see you reflected in her passion for life. God used Meagan's relationship with her dad to model to me, what a healthy father/daughter relationship looks like. Because of you and Lance, Meagan has gained a confidence and assurance in the way she lives life. I want to give that to my kids. So, I guess you were mentoring me.

It has been a joy for me to be able to watch Meagan grow from a little girl who loved God, to a teen who was sorting things out, to an amazing young woman who has made her faith her own. It was so awesome to see God honored and celebrated in her wedding. God's hand is on her life.

Thanks so much for including me in your lives. It has meant more to me than you'll ever know. Even though you may consider me a 'mentor' in Meagan's life, I feel like she's taught me much more than I've taught her.

Lindy Bridgers  
Las Cruces, NM

***FYI –It's All About Her!***(For Your Information -- *ONLY!*)***Don't take this with you and take notes! That would be bad!***

This is a list of things that you may want to eventually find out about whoever God puts in your life so that you can get a better picture of who she is and how she became who she is. This will help you pray for her more specifically and will help you to pray more clearly for wisdom for yourself in certain areas. But this happens with time and through relationship. This list is not, *by any means*, intended to be a fact sheet, or a to do list.

- Name -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Age -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Brothers/ Sisters -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Mom/ Dad -- \_\_\_\_\_
- Where do they live? \_\_\_\_\_
- Are they ...married/separated/divorce/living?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Is she ... single/married/separated/divorce? \_\_\_\_\_
- Travel? Nationally? Internationally?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Passion for ....? \_\_\_\_\_
- Job \_\_\_\_\_
- Career \_\_\_\_\_
- Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_
- Success \_\_\_\_\_
- What are her thoughts on marriage? \_\_\_\_\_
- Morality Meter? \_
- Currently involved in a relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
- Recently involved in a relationship? \_\_\_\_\_
  - What went wrong?
  - What was right?
- Animal Lover? Pets? \_\_\_\_\_
- Conservationist? \_\_\_\_\_
- Vegetarian? \_\_\_\_\_
- Religious Background? i.e. grew up in church? Catholic? Baptist? AG? \_\_\_\_\_

- Christian home?
  - What age did she start attending church? \_\_\_\_\_
  - With family? Friend? By herself?
- Currently attending church? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is she curious about spiritual growth? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is she currently in a small group or bible study? What are they studying? \_\_\_\_\_
- Other?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **My Walk With Susan**

*It started with her daughter doing cartwheels on the beach. She was young, new into gymnastics, and I was a coach. Helping her form while playing on the beach at our church's young generational ministry annual beach retreat, led to meeting her mother...the head pastor's wife of that ministry. She used to be a hair stylist some time ago, and offered to cut my hair at any time. I immediately took her up on it. Free haircut! WooHoo! That's how it all started. That's how she began to walk with me.*

*Susan actively became my mentor for the next six years to follow. It didn't start off in a church meeting... me, a young 20-something, longing for mentorship, leading and guidance from an older wiser woman in the Lord, heading to the women's ministry meeting at church, hoping and praying for the right match. It started from an older wiser woman in the Lord looking out for the younger generation, knowing she (I) needed mentoring, leading, and guidance, simply because it was a Biblical idea, and she was a Bible following woman.*

*We began meeting on Tuesdays, informally. It worked with her family and my work schedule. I was fairly new in the area, an avid volunteer at church, and she was a woman with a heart for the next generation of women. Susan and I met at her house, or the mall, or her daughters' volley ball or basketball games. We'd talk in the car en route to do errands, en route to go shopping for her latest house accessories, or to the book store to get the latest Christian book that she had read and thought would impact me, based on who she had come to know me as. We'd do laundry together while her kids were doing homework upstairs and her husband was at the Elder's meeting at church. We'd cook dinner together while her oldest daughter was watching TV and her youngest was practicing the piano for her lesson the next day. We'd go shopping, at the outdoor Outlets, of course, for the latest bargain, or simply just to have a place to walk and talk. We'd meet for tea, coffee, lunch, dinner, or breakfast. I'd dog-sit when she needed it if I could, and I'd offer to take the girls to spend some great time with them, to have another older woman in their lives to talk to, outside of their own mom. Susan trained me how to be a mentor, as she lived it, and didn't need to teach it with words.*

*Susan was, and continues to be, a great mentor and role model. She would answer my phone calls of the latest drama, and sometimes chose to ignore them, knowing in her heart I needed to rely more on God than on her. She protected her family. When we were supposed to meet and something within her family revealed greater importance, we were postponed. Susan rarely gave her opinion. More so, she led me in asking questions leading back to God, and teaching me self-learning with the Teacher Himself. We talked about the books she recommended, and always reviewed the Truth of the Word within our daily lives for application. Susan listened, watched, and allowed me to join in her life.*

*She modeled what she taught. She never offered a book she didn't read herself. Never offered a Bible Study she wasn't doing herself. Never offered advice she hadn't swallowed herself, or advice that wasn't asked for. She gently reprovved when necessary, and lovingly never judged, even in confession of my sin. Like Jesus, she listened, and like the woman at the well, I left feeling love and forgiveness from someone who just found out everything that I had done against the Lord. Every single time I left her presence, I felt the joy of the Lord, and the freedom of forgiveness.*

*By Susan's modeling, I saw a Godly marriage. Not a perfect one, but a Godly one. I saw her and her husband out-serve each other. She didn't have to tell me about serving my one-day-to-be-mate...she allowed me into her life, her home, and her family's life, to learn and see for myself. She didn't try to be something she wasn't, but offered me all she was. She shared the wisdom*

*that she had from her own life, marriage, children, past, family, experiences, etc. She loved me where she was at. She loved me where I was at. She enveloped everything I have looked to in a mentor since our time together.*

*I have since become a mentor and discipler to many younger women in my life. Susan has since moved across the country, and I, soon to marry a missionary, will travel the world by boat and spread the news of Jesus Christ, Lord willing, world-wide. I now look for that younger woman. I listen. I pray. I keep my eye open, and my heart aware, and my mind in tune for the next woman that Jesus will place in my path. I encourage others, even teens, to be looking for the younger one that the Lord will place in their path. And I implore the older generations to take the challenge, and responsibility, to offer themselves to those younger women around them. You are needed. We need you. We need your love, life, example, lifestyle, and help. You don't need to be perfect. God has built you perfectly for us.*

*Since my time with Susan, I have mentored many, fallen in love with the younger generation, and sought out the older one for the precious jewels of wisdom that they have to offer. I have been blessed to build a young women's ministry where we can talk about women's issues, and being Biblically based women of God, in a non-fluff, real life manner. I now am blessed with the opportunity to see Jesus' love lived out all over the world, by traveling with my soon-to-be-husband, and offer the same, everyday, love and guidance that were once offered to me every Tuesday.*

*It doesn't take a seminary degree. It doesn't take a life-time of struggles, or a perfect marriage (of which I hear there are none) ☺ It takes two women, and a willing heart. God will guide the rest, and change lives through it.*

*I owe Susan so much, and all the other mentors since, who have willingly chosen to delve into my life, and in the end, have a part in making me the best woman for Christ I can be, no matter the circumstances. Thank you Susan, and ALL of the other incredible women out there who give daily the talents they have, to those of us who are thirsting to be just a regular part of your day. Thank you for your willing heart. And thank you for your love*

*Karyn Long  
Metro Washington, D.C./NOVA*



## I get it ... What now?

Let's do a quick recap.

- Lifestyle mentoring is a matter of changing your lens to see the women God has already placed in your life (or very soon will!) and intentionally developing a relationship with them.
- There is no program; you simply invite her to walk with you through life, be it at your home, running errands, or over coffee.
- Your curriculum is your life; your experiences, successes and failures, joys and sorrows, and most importantly, how God has impacted you through it all.
- Ignore the myths – There is nothing that Satan would like better than for you to believe the lies he's feeding you ... or better yet, just wait and don't do anything!
- Embrace the Marks – the non-negotiables of mentoring. You could be doing this already! Just recognize it, and be more intentional!

## Now what ...

Here are some steps for you to get started.

- **PRAY** -- Pray that God would start changing your lens. Pray that He would reveal young women in your life that would benefit from a deeper relationship with you. If you aren't aware of any young women in your life, pray that God would bring someone, and that He would give you the eyes to see her as He intended.
- **START** --Start developing existing relationships. Start changing your lens. Start inviting this young woman deeper into your life. Be the initiator. Start taking steps to begin building new and lasting relationships with the next generation. You won't be disappointed!
- **EXPLORE** – Explore the tools we have provided in the previous section. They will help you to develop your life curriculum, discover the times in your schedule that are mentoring opportunities in hiding, and offer some good tips for connecting.
- **CONNECT**—Connect with a friend or two to partner with you in this journey. It always helps to have someone in your life, your age, who's on the same page. Someone who is already doing this and is just starting to realize it, or someone who is willing to jump in the boat with you!

Sometimes we can't see something that's right in front of us. It just takes a good friend to point it out. Ask your friends to be an extra set of lenses, on the lookout for a girl who could benefit from a relationship with you or a girl you could start being more intentional with, and encourage your friends to look for the young women in their own lives. Having a friend along for the journey can also be encouraging when you have minor snags in your relationship (as every relationship inevitably will).

*"It's better to have a partner than go it alone. Share the work, share the wealth. ? And if one falls down, the other helps, But if there's no one to help, tough!"*

*Ecclesiastes 4:9 (MSG)*

OR introduce this as your discipleship/mentoring strategy in your already existing Women's Ministry. Let me make this clear. This shouldn't be a program within itself. It *SHOULD* be a component of your already existing programs. Just take these principles, lay them out for your women, and then make it a point to do a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly check up. For example, on First Meeting week, check in with each other and see if your lens is being refocused. Do you see a girl in your life differently? Are your lenses still a little cloudy? Have women in your life suggest times when you could be more aware of your surroundings and who God puts in your path. What is her name? What are your next steps? Compare calendars. What are you learning from her? What are you learning about yourself through this relationship? How are you developing the relationship? Are there prayer requests that you can share with the group concerning her? Be sure and share praise reports! Tell those around you how God has

answered prayer in her life. Share how God is using her to keep your walk fresh! Share how God is using you in her life! WOW!!!! How powerful!

Once 'lifestyle mentoring' is introduced into the DNA of your women's ministry, the rest will fall into place. You will start viewing everything you do through the 'discipleship/mentoring' lens. It will become a part of you, not just an 'add on' ministry or program. You won't need outreach programs because your lifestyle is all about outreach. Once you start implementing this into your life, everything and everyone around you changes. You will start seeing everything through the filter of impacting the next generation.

God has given you the opportunity to touch someone's life. You may see her clearly, or you may not see her at all ... yet! But she is there. God has given *YOU* the story that she needs to hear and the tools to help her grow.

In Mark 3:14, the Bible says,

*14He appointed twelve—designating them apostles<sup>a</sup>—that they might **be with him** and that he might send them out to preach*

Jesus knew the benefit of spending time with people. He knew that the only way for the apostles to see the authenticity, the reality of His deity was to watch His life. He wanted them to BE with him, that he might send them out to tell others of Him.

He wants you to do the same!  
So remember:

## **W – Watch**

For those God puts in your path ... Change your lens

## **A -- Allow**

Allow God to work through you  
Allow young women into your life

## **L – Look for the God Moments**

## **K – Keep**

Keep it real! Be authentic  
Keep it fresh! Keep your walk with God fresh!

**YOU CAN DO THIS!**

We invite you to take the following pages and write down what God is teaching you about:

Yourself

Jot down the things God brings to mind about your own journey. The things God has taught you through your successes, failures, hurts, joys, etc. Go through the list provided. Pray, meditate and really think about the journey God's brought you on to this point. Write down what big things he's taught you, *how* he taught you and those God used to speak into your life during those times.

Look at the Calendar and compare it to your own. Write down opportunities to have someone come along with you. Start praying about the 'who' in your life. Who has God put in your path that is a few steps behind you on the journey.

Her

Once you have recognized 'her', write down how you met, the connection, the start of the journey and the things you are praying for her about. Write down moments that you share together, insights she has that impacts YOU! Fun times and memories are always great to remember. If there are concerns for her, write those down and pray, pray, pray! God will give you the perfect time to share those concerns with her.

Basically, just use the following section as a prayer journal to help you remember where God has brought you from and what He's brought you through. And then, write down specific things to pray for those God puts in your life.

Someday, God will give you the perfect opportunity for you to share this journal with her. What an awesome tool to show her how far she's come, how you've been praying for her, what YOU have learned from her, and how you've seen her grow both emotionally AND spiritually!





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4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. 5 He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, 6 so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

Psalm 78:4-7

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Now that I am old and gray, do not abandon me, O  
God. Let me proclaim your power to this new  
generation, your mighty miracles to all who come after  
me.

*Psalm 71:17-19 (NLT)*

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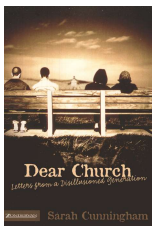
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## **Recommended Reading List**



**Dear Church: Letters From a Disillusioned Generation**  
By: Sarah Cunningham  
Zondervan / 2006 / Paperback



**Blue Like Jazz: Nonreligious Thoughts on Christian Spirituality**  
by Donald Miller  
Thomas Nelson/2003/Paperback



**The Bridger Generation**  
By Thom S. Rainer  
B&H Publishing Group/2006/Paperback



BUY THE BOOK  
**unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity... and Why It Matters**  
by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons  
*Baker Books/October 2007/Hardcover*

For more information on speaking engagements,  
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