

TOPIC 2

Building Compassion and Community

Providential Relationships

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love in good deeds, not giving up meeting together... but encouraging one another.

Hebrews 10:23-25

If God has ever given you the opportunity to share the journey with someone facing incredibly difficult circumstances, your faith became richer and grittier as you watched them maintain their faith in God through these difficult times.

That's the power of providential relationships.

You don't choose providential relationships; you can't create a providential relationship.

But here's the thing: We should, and we can, all be proactive in forming relationships with people whose faith informs their decisions and responses to life's difficulties.

The author of Hebrews writes, "Let us," talking about the faith community, hold unswervingly. 'Hold unswervingly' is such a powerful thought for all of us.

You can't let go of your faith in God; where will you place your hope?

The author of Hebrews says let us consider how we may spur one another on to facilitate our holding on unswervingly.

If you maintain your faith, you'll need some other people, and those people will need you.

Proximity matters when it comes to the reality of our faith, our faithfulness, and experiencing God's faithfulness. Proximity and relationship are faith builders.

People lose faith when they lose contact with people of faith.

It has to do with watching God work in other people's lives. We realize we're not an island, we realize we're not on our own, and we're not the only one.

When we see God's faithfulness in someone else's life, trusting Him with ours is easier.

When we see God's sustaining grace, faith, and activity in someone else's circumstances, it's easier to trust God, especially when walking through the valley.

There is something we can do to facilitate our faith and the faith of our child. Our role is to stay connected.

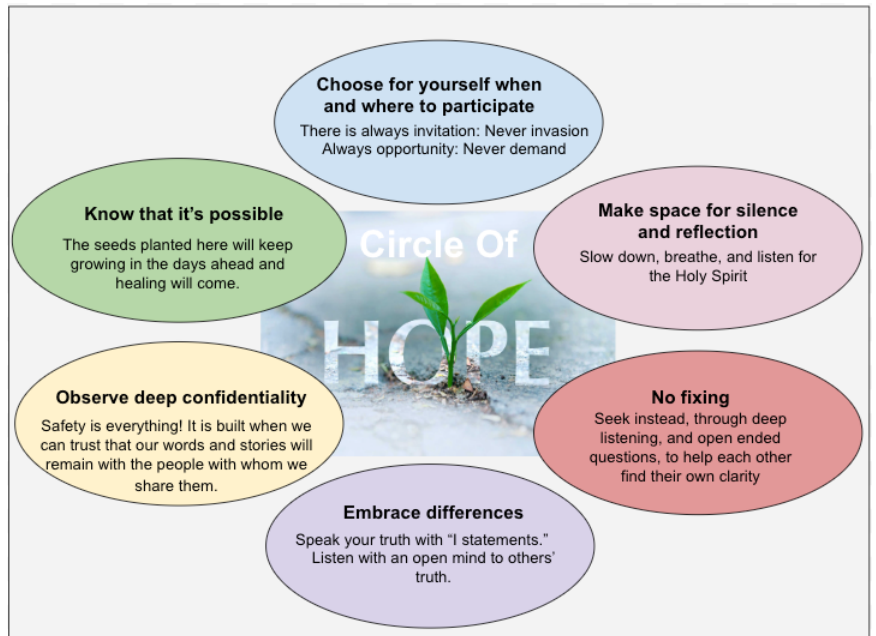
Sit with me. You have no idea what is on the other side of this simple invitation.

Reinforcing the Boundaries and Guiding Principles

Before we begin our Circles of Hope discussion, it's important for everyone to review the following guiding principles and boundaries. These are essential for creating a safe and restorative space for those dealing with spiritual trauma.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Play the “long game” and trust God with the outcome.
- Use love to build bridges to Jesus; don't lose the relationship.
- You can love well without losing your convictions of faith.



CIRCLE OF HOPE TOPIC

How can we cultivate empathy and foster a sense of belonging in our church or small group, so that parents like us can feel comfortable confiding in and trusting others with their struggles?