

## CONVERSATION STARTERS

- "I thought we might begin by telling each other a little bit about ourselves."
- You might include at some point a simple explanation of why you decided to become a mentor/encourager/friend: "I believe women need to be there for each other, a sisterhood of sorts, and, sometimes, it can be very helpful to talk something through with a safe person."
- "What are some of the things you learned about yourself in The Story Workshop?"
- "I would love to have you share your timeline with me sometime, if you don't mind."
- "What is your biggest challenge right now?"
- "What are some things you do to take care of yourself during stressful times?"
- Ask for names of children, family, friends, or significant others who are important in their story.
- "How would you best describe yourself? Strengths? Weaknesses?"
- "What recharges you? Gives you energy? Encouragement?"
- "What drains you?"
- You can ask about hobbies, interests, talents, skills.
- You can ask about their future dreams as well as immediate short range goals.
- "Tell me a good thing that happened this week. Now one hard thing."
- You can ask where they are spiritually, what their history is with God, church, etc. I often preface that question by explaining that we are physical, emotional/mental, and spiritual, and that I have heard about the physical, emotional/mental parts of them, but not yet the spiritual. How they respond then tells me where I can go spiritually with them.
- "Are there any questions you want to ask me?"
- "Is there anything specific you want me to pray for you between now and the time we meet again?"

- "What is the best way to reach you? Texting? Phone calls? Emails? Can I leave messages?"
- "Let's talk about some good places for us to meet." (public but allowing for private conversations)
- And, last, but not least, the two of you need to go over that what you talk about is confidential, with the only exception being if they tell you something that constitutes abuse of a child, an elderly person or a mentally handicapped person.