

Connecting Conversation #9:

What can I do when I feel overwhelmed? (Renewal)

Share how last week's **Soul-training practice** impacted you or others.

Start the Conversation:

Complete this sentence: I get overwhelmed when I'm _____.

Where do you tend to go to escape or cope with those feelings of being overwhelmed? (For example: Binge-watch Netflix? Pick up a novel? Shopping? A friend?) (What's your go-to escape or coping mechanism . . .)

Read the Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out . . . ? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly."(The Message)

Continue the Conversation:

When you think about your "go-to" for dealing with being overwhelmed, doubting, or hurting (in the above question), will that something/someone *always* be there for you?

If renewal is found in the Person of Jesus rather than a change in the situation, how would you see yourself being renewed? What would this look like for you?

Soul-training practice (between conversations):

Think about what kind of activities revive your mind, body & soul, and then plan a "mini-sabbath" this week—an unstructured, unhurried time set aside for rest and recharging.

(In your next conversation, you will share how this practice impacted you.)

Connecting Conversation #10:

What is the most important thing in my life? (Priorities)

Share how last week's **Soul-training practice** impacted you or others.

Start the Conversation:

If you had to evacuate your home, name something (besides the people in your home) that you would not want to leave behind.

Read the Scripture: Matthew 6:19-21 (NLT)

¹⁹ "Don't store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. ²⁰ Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.

Continue the Conversation:

1. If you unexpectedly came into some money, what expenditure would give you the greatest delight?
2. What temporary opportunities, responsibilities, needs & desires tend to drive you and distract you from what's eternally important?
3. What would you say is your #1 treasure? Does the way you spend your time & money reflect this? (Would a glance at your schedule & checkbook verify this?)

Soul-training practice (between conversations):

Choose one day this coming week and write down a list of all activities that you spent an hour or more doing. (For example: exercise, read Bible, pay bills, fix meals, text friends, carpool, social media, watch TV, volunteer, etc.) Then next to each activity, write down what you are treasuring by spending your time in that activity.

(In your next Connecting Conversation, you will share how this practice impacted you.)

Connecting Conversation #11:

What messages is my soul listening to? (Truth)

Share how last week's **Soul-training practice** impacted you or others.

Start the Conversation:

What's the funniest or falsest rumor that ever circulated about you?

Read the Scripture: Ephesians 5:8-11 (NLT)

⁸For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! ⁹For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true.

¹⁰Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. ¹¹Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them.

Continue the Conversation:

It's been said that we privately preach to ourselves continually. Share a mental message that you've been hearing in your head since childhood—that you realize isn't entirely true or healthy.

What have you been saying to you about yourself? Is it true?

What have you been saying to you about God? Is it true?

Soul-training practice (between conversations):

Consider one truthful message your soul needs to hear (about yourself or about God). Write it down and repeat it to yourself daily throughout the week.

(In your next conversation, you will share how this practice impacted you.)

Connecting Conversation #12: *Where can I find PEACE in such anxious times?*

Share how last week's **Soul-training practice** impacted you or others.

Start the Conversation:

Share a time when you experienced peace; what were the contributing circumstances?

Read the Scripture: Philippians 4:6-8

⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

⁸ And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.^[NLT]

Continue the Conversation:

1. When circumstances threaten to rob you of peace & you start feeling anxious, which question do you typically ask: Why? How? What if? or Who?
2. What practical, self-care actions help you lessen anxious feelings?
(For example, turning off the news & turning on worship music, going for a walk or run, playing soothing music, etc.)
3. How would you personally be affected if you turned your H-O-W (How can I fix this? How can I change the outcome?) into W-H-O (Who does He say He is? Who does He promise to be?)

We don't need to know the future; we just need to know HIM.

Soul-training practice (between conversations):

Consider your daily morning routine & determine which area could use a gentle shift towards intentional peacefulness. This week, make just one change to your morning routine, whether you commit to taking the time to make your bed, or take a 15-minute walk, or dismiss your cell phone for a period of time, or rise an hour earlier to work before the children wake.

(If you decide to meet again, you will share how this practice impacted you.)