PWOC

Protestant Women of the Chapel

Red décor
Red accessories
CD player
Instrumental Music

WORKSHOP: RED TENT MENTORING

By Jennifer Wake

LEADER'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: What is mentoring? How can we develop mentoring relationships without becoming overwhelmed? Mentoring is meeting with women who are younger, older or the same age to share life experiences together.

CONTEXT: This workshop is for any Protestant Women of the Chapel group. It can be used for a program or any training venue and is applicable for ladies of any age. The material could easily be expanded into 2-4 sessions for a weekend retreat. Smaller portions of the workshop could also be used for shorter trainings or for a devotional.

TIME: 75-90 minutes

HOOK YOUR AUDIENCE: (10 minutes)

Wear the color red, and consider bringing red accessories (a scarf, a bracelet, a hat, etc.) to share with your participants. Decorate the room with red coverings on the table(s) and have lots of red accents everywhere.

There is a fictional book (and corresponding movie) called *The Red Tent*, based on the story of Dinah (Genesis 34). Though it is not an accurate recounting of what happened, I want to focus on a concept that the book brings out.

Ladies in the Old Testament were nomads so they lived in tents. The Old Testament book of Leviticus spells out the concept of women being "unclean" during their time of the month and after childbirth. Leviticus 15:19-30 talks of women's monthly cycle, but when women gave birth, there were even more rules.

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Leviticus 12:1-8 (NASB)

> *Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Speak to the sons of Israel, saying: When a woman gives birth and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean for seven days, as in the days of her menstruation she shall be unclean. On the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. Then she shall remain in the blood of her purification for thirty-three days; she shall not touch any consecrated thing, nor enter the sanctuary until the days of her purification are completed. But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean for two weeks, as in her menstruation; and she shall remain in the blood of her purification for sixty-six days. When the days of her purification are completed, for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the doorway of the tent of meeting a one-year-old lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering. Then he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her, and she shall be cleansed from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, whether a male or a female. But if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two young pigeons, the one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering; and the priest shall make atonement for her, and she will be clean.'*

They could not touch anything or it would be "unclean." Where could they go? *The Red Tent.* Perhaps the concept of being separate from all the "clean" people is offensive to you, but think about it… These women were allowed to have a break from the demanding lifestyle of a nomad. The Red Tent would have been a place of rest and of fellowship with other women, where men were not allowed- a place of respite and mutual understanding.

Though I don't have anything that proves the Red Tent existed, I hope it did! I love to think of PWOC in this light. Of course our ministry does not center around the concept of being "clean" or "unclean" as in Old Testament times, but what are some ways that PWOC might be similar to the atmosphere of the Red Tent? *Allow responses.*

I like to think that PWOC is our proverbial Red Tent- our time to come together as women. I enjoy sitting with the "seasoned" ladies, the ones with salt-and-pepper hair (some have more salt than pepper in their hair but they still are full of pep!). I also love sitting with younger ladies with babies. I often enjoy stealing babies…ok I do give them back eventually. But I also spend time with ladies who are in my season of life- ones with teens, who are gaining the grey hair due to teenage years.

> *Note to Trainer: Insert your own personal experience here. A window into your life will be much more impacting to your listeners than reading someone else's story that your participants likely do not know.*

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As we talk about the concept of mentoring, let's keep the simplicity of the Red Tent in mind. Let's find the common ground where we can all gather and share the stuff of life. Let's set aside the imperfect generalization of mentoring, defined as the younger instructed by the older and let's settle into the comfort of friendships, of all ages, that provide mutual growth.

MAKE YOUR POINT 1: **Peer Mentoring** (10 minutes)

Martha and Mary

Mary and Martha are sisters who live with their brother, Lazarus. Being siblings, they are likely close in age (at least from the same generation). We find three stories about these sisters; each one shows us how Jesus encourages them in their strengths.

Luke 10:38-42

Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, 'Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me.' But the Lord answered and said to her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her.'

This story presents a frazzled Martha- distracted by all that must be accomplished to accommodate her guests. I can relate. I too tend to get frazzled when I invite people over, but my friends who mentor me remind me to be present in the moment and that my guests will enjoy time together rather than worrying about things not being perfect.

The Story of Lazarus

John 11:17-27

So when Jesus came, He found that he [Lazarus] had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off; and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother. Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house. Martha then said to Jesus, 'Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to Him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to Him, 'Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.'

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This story tells about how Martha gets it right because she realizes she is with the Son of God. He has the true power. Mary is noticeably absent in this encounter. Perhaps Martha goes back and shares this story with her sister. Perhaps Martha's faith inspires Mary to also believe in the power of Jesus, who is the Resurrection and the Life. We can see glimpses that this might be the case from the next passage.

> **John 12:1-7**
> *Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him. Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, 'Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?' Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it. Therefore, Jesus said, 'Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me.'*

Here is Mary's turn to have faith and to serve Jesus. It seems that Mary and Martha have worked out some of their issues because Martha is still serving but she is not annoyed. Mary is again at the feet of Jesus, who raised her brother from the dead. Even before that unparalleled miracle, Martha recognized him as *the Christ*- the Messiah, the Savior, the Promised One. Undoubtedly, Martha's view of Jesus had influence on this moment in time when Mary anoints Jesus' feet.

I have to be honest…I have to admit I feel old many times. I am older than most spouses of the service members that my husband works with. Although I like talking to women of all ages, sometimes I need friends my own age. I need peers who are going through the same stages as I am with my kids. I need women who have walked in my shoes, who have experienced some of the same hardships that I have known. I find that ladies who are like me help me realize I am not crazy. I am not alone. PWOC has always been my place to talk to other women and find common ground.

> *Note to Trainer: Again, insert your own personal story here. Let your participants have a window into your life. The more accessible you are, the more responsive they will be.*

Possible Illustration: Choose someone in the room who is a peer, in the same stage of life as you are. Point out how she has impacted your life.

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ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS: (10-15 Minutes)

Make a list of your BFFs. Who is like you? Who has kids your kids' ages? Who is walking in your shoes? How do they impact your life? How do you impact theirs? How often do you connect? Share your answers with 1 or 2 other ladies.

MAKE YOUR POINT 2: "Younger" Mentoring "Older" (10 minutes)

Ruth and Naomi

Sometimes I feel old, but other times I think of myself as young. I love listening to older women; their point of view challenges me. I love to hear their stories- fabulous stories that inspire. Their backgrounds and family structures are varied- some are moms, some grandmas. Some have no biological children, but are still mother to many. Some are single, some are widowed. Their life experiences and educational backgrounds are as varied as the patches on a homemade quilt- all beautiful, all meaningful, all contributing to a collaborative work of art.

Listening to "older" women takes many forms. When I was at my first duty station I met Jenny. Jenny was 10 years younger than me but had kids my kids' ages and older. She was an "older" woman in my life at Fort Carson. She taught me about PWOC, the Army and living a Christian life. She was younger in age than I was but she was older in her love of the Lord and her time in the Army. She served as the Programs VP while I was President. She talked about "changing things up" with Programs and demonstrated this through purposeful programs and talked about God in every situation.

Note to Trainer: Again, insert your own example here. Make it personal.

Jenny may have been younger in age but I listened to her and learned from her. In the Book of Ruth, we find the story of Ruth and Naomi. Ruth mentored Naomi, even though Ruth was the daughter-in-law. Both had been recently widowed and were left destitute. These two ladies had no one but each other.

- **Ruth 1:16-18** *But Ruth said, 'Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.' When she [Naomi] saw that she [Ruth] was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.*

- **Ruth 2:2** *And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, 'Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor.' And she said to her, 'Go, my daughter.'*

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- **Ruth 2:18** *She took it [gleaned wheat] up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also took it out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.*

Ruth was a Moabite. She did not know God. But she had learned about God from marrying into the Jewish faith. She had watched both Naomi and her husband trust God. Now it was her turn to help Naomi with trusting God. They moved together and had to figure out life without men, which was not an easy task in their society in which women could not own anything. But Ruth had faith which she showed to Naomi.

Ruth demonstrated exactly what we see in I Timothy.

- **I Timothy 3:11** *Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.*

Do you have a "younger" woman who has taught you about things?

Possible Illustration: Choose someone in the room who is younger than you are. Point out how she has impacted your life.

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS: (10-15 minutes)

Let's take a few minutes to talk about this in the Red Tent.

So now break into your same group of 2 or 3 and share about a younger woman in your life who has taught you about spiritual things.

> *Note to Trainer: After your participants have had time to share in their small groups, you may want to give individual volunteers the opportunity to share their answers with the whole group. Sharing out can help to foster an atmosphere of ownership in which your learners become more invested and interactive, which will help in their retention of the content of the workshop.*

MAKE YOUR POINT 3: "Older" Mentoring "Younger" (10 minutes)

Naomi and Ruth

I am older now. I am not necessarily wiser but I am older in my faith than I was. Each day I grow deeper in love with God. This is why I train and teach. I want to pass on the love of God to the next generations.

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God has gifted me with teaching and training skills. But I also love to cook and knit. I love to share my love of cooking with my daughters. I have tried to teach them to knit but they don't enjoy it like I do; who knows, maybe a grandchild might pick it up someday- my grandmother taught me. My mother taught me to cook and to keep a strict accounting of money. I try to teach that to my children. Sometimes it works…sometimes….

Back to the story of Ruth and Naomi. Once they get settled and Ruth has found a way to get food, Naomi starts teaching her about the culture. Naomi starts mentoring Ruth.

- **Ruth 3:1** *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, 'My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?'*

- **Ruth 3:18** *Then she said, 'Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out; for the man will not rest until he has settled it today.'*

Naomi teaches Ruth about the culture of the time and how to win over a Kinsman-redeemer. Her faith has returned and so she is able to teach again.

- **Proverbs 31:26** *She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.*

- **Titus 2:2-5** *Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance. Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.*

I had to add this Titus passage. Notice that men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible. Sounds stogie to me. I like the rest where women are to be reverent and teaching, and encouraging. That sounds like PWOC!

ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS: (10-15 minutes)

Let's meet one last time in the Red Tent. In your small group, share about the following questions:

- What skill or talent do you have that you could share with "younger" women? How could you share? Where?

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- In what way(s) can you pass on your faith, your love of God, to the next generation? Is God encouraging you to branch out in this area? How?

> *Note to Trainer: If time allows, you may want to have your participants share their answers. The whole group will benefit by being exposed to more ideas about how practical skills and also our faith in God can be handed down to the next generation.*

APPLY IT TO LIFE: (5 minutes)

As we move forward from this workshop, I challenge you to meet some "older" and "younger" women, and to also interact with your peers. True mentoring is part of the fabric of life and it flows out of relationship. Sometimes those relationships naturally unfold with very little effort, but other times God calls us to intentional pursuit. We need each other.

Who is God calling you to build relationship with? Is it someone who is already a part of your life? Are there adjustments needed in the relationship?

Is there someone you are not currently in relationship with that perhaps God is calling you to befriend? What can you do to establish friendship with them? Could a passion, hobby or skill you possess become common ground for your friendship to grow?

Let's take a few minutes to sit quietly before the Lord. Write down the name of anyone God brings to mind. Jot down any direction you receive on how to enhance a current friendship or how to pursue a new one.

Set a timer for 5 minutes to allow your participants to listen to God. Consider having peaceful instrumental music playing in the background. After the timer is up, pull your group back together and seal your time together with a prayer.

Creator God, thank You for how You have made us as women. Thank You for how naturally relational we are and for how we delight in one another's company. Thank You for the ministry of PWOC that provides a place like the Red Tent in which we can find respite and mutual understanding. May we reach out to those around us and foster deep mentoring friendships in which we can both teach and learn. Show us the women in our lives that we need to befriend and support. May our hearts be pure and may Your name be glorified. Let the generations that follow us hear of Your great love. -Amen

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

RELEVANCE: What is mentoring? How can we develop mentoring relationships without becoming overwhelmed? Mentoring is meeting with women who are younger, older or the same age to share life experiences together.

INTRO: PWOC, OUR PROVERBIAL "RED TENT"

- Genesis 34; Leviticus 12 & 15
- Rest, Fellowship, Mutual Understanding
- What are some ways that PWOC might be similar to the atmosphere of the Red Tent?

I. Peer Mentoring: Martha and Mary

- Luke 10:38-42
- John 11:17-27
- John 12:1-7
- Martha and Mary had different strengths and personalities that provided mutual benefit for growth. We learn from our peers who are uniquely designed by God.

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ACTIVITY:

Take a few minutes to make a list of your BFFs. Who is like you? Who has kids your kids' ages? Who is walking in your shoes? How do they impact your life? How do you impact theirs? How often do you connect? Form a small group (2-3 people) and share your answers with 1 or 2 other ladies.

II. "Younger" Mentoring "Older": Ruth and Naomi

- Sometimes there are those who are younger in age, but "older" or more mature in their Christian walk

- **Ruth 1:16-18** *But Ruth said, 'Do not urge me to leave you or turn back from following you; for where you go, I will go, and where you lodge, I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, and there I will be buried. Thus may the LORD do to me, and worse, if anything but death parts you and me.' When she [Naomi] saw that she [Ruth] was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.*

- **Ruth 2:2** *And Ruth the Moabitess said to Naomi, 'Please let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain after one in whose sight I may find favor.' And she said to her, 'Go, my daughter.'*

- **Ruth 2:18** *She took it [gleaned wheat] up and went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned. She also took it out and gave Naomi what she had left after she was satisfied.*

- Ruth helped Naomi trust in God again

- **I Timothy 3:11** *Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.*

- Do you have a "younger" woman who has taught you about things?

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ACTIVITY:

Break into your same group of 2 or 3 and share about a younger woman in your life who has taught you about spiritual things.

III. "Older" Mentoring "Younger": Naomi and Ruth

- Naomi starts teaching Ruth about the culture.
- **Ruth 3:1** *Then Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, 'My daughter, shall I not seek security for you, that it may be well with you?'*
- **Ruth 3:18** *Then she said, 'Wait, my daughter, until you know how the matter turns out; for the man will not rest until he has settled it today.'*
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- Teaching, and encouraging. That sounds like PWOC!

ACTIVITY:

Meet with your group one last time and share about the following questions:

- What skill or talent do you have that you could share with "younger" women? How could you share? Where?
- In what way(s) can you pass on your faith, your love of God, to the next generation? Is God encouraging you to branch out in this area? How?

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APPLY IT TO LIFE:

- Who is God calling you to build relationship with? Is it someone who is already a part of your life? Are there adjustments needed in the relationship?

- Is there someone you are not currently in relationship with that perhaps God is calling you to befriend? What can you do to establish friendship with them? Could a passion, hobby or skill you possess become common ground for your friendship to grow?

Let's take a few minutes to sit quietly before the Lord. Write down the name of anyone God brings to mind. Jot down any direction you receive on how to enhance a current friendship or how to pursue a new one. In about five minutes, we'll come back together for a closing prayer.

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