

# relationships that matter

## TOOL KIT

In Pathway Step 2, we learned how vital it is to have Relationships that Matter (RTMs). Our hope for this virtual tool kit is that it will give you some next steps in finding and cultivating RTMs in your life.

**Let's first define what it means to have an RTM:**

- 1) Someone who cares for you
- 2) Someone who wants God's best for you
- 3) Someone you like to be around

**This tool kit will be broken up into four parts.**

- 1) Practical Ways to Find an RTM – Where? Who? How?
- 2) Vulnerability – This is the key to breaking down the walls that could be holding you back from having great RTMs in your life
- 3) Giving and Receiving Care – how to care about yourself and others
- 4) The Holy Spirit – Why knowing how to hear His voice can change everything about you and your RTMs

*Grab a notebook as you walk through this toolkit to keep your thoughts and answer a couple of questions in each section.*

### **Tool #1: Practical Ways to Find an RTM**

There are people all around you. It's just about having a different set of eyes and looking at people the way God sees them and asking God, "Would you lead me to someone that would be a great RTM for me?" These people can be found in your schools, neighborhoods, family, sporting events, community events, work place, church, and any other groups you are a part of. The other part of this tool will cover what we do with RTMs and what makes RTMs different than a regular relationship.

**Here are a few places to meet people specifically at CT:**

**Pathway!** – If you haven't been to our Pathway this is another great place to meet people. It is offered the first two weeks of every month during the first service or you can attend Pathway Online anytime. The Pathway is how we grow in our faith as we learn to Follow Jesus, Find Freedom, have Someone to Know, and Something to Do. [Click here to register for Pathway.](#)

**On a Serve Team!** – Are you serving at CT? This is a great place to start meeting people while using gifts, passion, and story for the kingdom. [Click here to join the Serve Team.](#)

**Free Market Groups!** – provide the opportunity to meet like-minded people who want to do life together. Some folks bond through common interests, others through Bible Study. The possibilities of finding or forming community with people you enjoy being around are endless!  
[Click here to join a Free Market Group.](#)

Now you may be asking yourself what makes an RTM different from other relationships? Let's take a closer look at how to move from relationships to relationships that matter.

Here is an easy acronym to remind yourself of some ways to move from interactions to relationships that matter! ESPN:

**E** - Encourage:

Lift each other up; build each other up; carry each other's burdens and celebrate wins. (In person, by text, phone, email—however you want)

**S** - Share Scripture:

Scripture is an important part of your conversations. It doesn't mean every convo is a Bible Study—but scripture is woven into relationships.

**P** - Pray:

Pray for each other and with each other. Sometimes in person, on phone, by text, etc.

**N** - Next Steps Challenge:

We are continuously helping and challenging each other to new steps of obedience and becoming more like Christ in every day, practical ways.

*\*\*\*Reflection: What are some places you gather regularly where you can look for an RTM?*

*Action Item – Have you been to Pathway? Do you have a place to serve? Are you in a free market group? Pick one of the ESPN action steps and commit to taking one of those this week with a potential RTM.*

## **Tool #2: Vulnerability**

**Vul·ner·a·bil·i·ty (noun):** the quality or state of being exposed to the possibility of being attacked or harmed, either physically or emotionally.

Wow! Sounds like something we want to run from, right? From the outside it does sound scary but if we are honest, we all have the desire to be fully known and fully loved. If we are not fully known, but loved, it can feel fraudulent. If we are fully known, but not fully loved, it can feel like other people's love is conditional and that we are not enough. We were created for connection, and vulnerability can be the key to unlocking RTMs in your life. Being open and authentic with each other and sharing the good, the bad and the ugly can take your relationship to a whole new level. When we are open and honest with things that are happening in our life it may feel awkward or risky, but it is absolutely critical to developing RTMs.

Dr. Brené Brown, Research Storyteller, talks about the power of vulnerability in her works. Check out her TED Talk below to get a new perspective on Vulnerability.

[Click here to watch the video on Vulnerability.](#)

*\*\*\*Reflection: As you think about Vulnerability in relation to your RTMs, are there walls that you have built to protect your heart? What if you trusted God to be the protector and defender of your heart? How would your relationships be different?*

### **Tool #3: Giving and Receiving Care**

The goal for the third tool in your RTM tool kit is learning to know and love yourself better and how to relate to other people. When you can learn to appreciate how God created you uniquely, you can begin to love yourself and love others well.

Here are some powerful quotes about knowing yourself:

“Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom.” -Aristotle

“The privilege of a life time is to become who you truly are.” – Carl Jung

“It takes courage to grow up and become who you really are” – EE Cummings

Here are some great resources to learn more about giving and receiving care:

[Enneagram: Click here to purchase the \*Road Back to You\*.](#)

[5 Love Languages: Click here to take the \*5 Love Languages\* quiz.](#)

[Boundaries: Click here to purchase \*Boundaries\*.](#)

*\*\*\*Reflection: What does self-care mean to you? How do you practice self-care? (hobbies, creative outlets, exercise, quiet time, nature, reading... etc.) After taking the 5-love languages quiz, what is your love language and the love language of someone you care about and how can you speak their love language to them this week?*

### **Tool #4: How to Hear from the Lord**

Okay, this one is important! When you know how to listen and discern the voice of God in your life it changes everything about how you approach RTMs.

**John 14:25-27 says the Holy Spirit is simply described as our friend.**

*25-27 “I’m telling you these things while I’m still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I’m leaving you well and whole. That’s my parting gift to you. Peace. I don’t leave you the way you’re used to being left—feeling abandoned, bereft. So, don’t be upset. Don’t be distraught.*

Other Bible translations call the Holy Spirit our Helper. As you work through this tool kit let’s remember to take the Holy Spirit, our Friend, and our Helper along with us to discover more about RTMs and how to hear from the Lord.

As our Friend and Helper, the Holy Spirit is available to us 24/7. God wants nothing more than a true relationship with us. His desire is to speak to us and guide us. A component of a great relationship is great communication. It’s a two way street. It’s both sharing with Him and listening to Him. For some of us, trying to hear from God can seem really mysterious and even weird or complicated, but it doesn’t have to be. We are not talking about hearing God audibly (although he could if he wanted to.)

### **Hearing from God is about listening to God's voice and responding:**

1. Ask, Listen, Respond
2. Ask God to Speak; Take time to Listen; Respond (Take a Step and do what you've heard him say)

### **God can speak to us in any way he wants but let's look at 3 of them:**

1. The Word (Bible)
2. Our Mind (Thoughts and Impressions)
3. A Person (a friend speaking to you, praying for you)

The Holy Spirit is working in those areas to speak to us.

*\*\*\*Reflection: How in your life do you see the Holy Spirit as a friend? In your notebook jot down this question. "Lord, what do you want me to hear from you today?" Spend 10 minutes listening and write down what you hear from Him.*

### **Taking Your Next Step Toward RTMs**

*\*\*\*Reflection: Let's look at the definition of an RTM again and take a moment to write down some people in your life that:*

- Care about you
- Want God's best for you
- You like being around

If you find yourself having a hard time coming up with a list of names, it's ok. Don't stress about it. Simply pray and ask God to open your eyes to the people around you and ask Him to help you find Relationships that Matter in your life.

You'll be amazed at what God does as you open your eyes to the people around you, embrace vulnerability, begin to love yourself and others more and then tune into the Holy Spirit. You will experience relationships on a deeper level and have RTMs that change your life forever!



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