

Dear Titus 2 Leaders,

Welcome to Mom to Mom! In agreeing to be a Mentor Mom, you have just entered into a wonderful adventure. An adventure—a calling, really—designed by God. When God instructed older women to teach and encourage younger women (see Titus 2:3–4), He knew what He was doing. He knew that younger moms need us. They need more experienced moms to extend a hand of encouragement, help, and hope—to cheer them on in the parenting journey. He also knew that we, as more experienced moms, need each other—and Him! As we meet together to teach and encourage and pray for “our moms,” we will also be drawn closer together as women of God, learning and growing and seeking Him together. It’s a great plan!



It may seem a little scary at first. Many of our leaders have confessed to feeling a bit intimidated, or unqualified, or tentative. But again and again we have been amazed at what God does in and through us when we “show up” and are faithful and obedient to His calling. Moms today are not looking for perfection or easy answers—they know better than that. They’re looking for authenticity, encouragement, and hope. As we walk alongside them in their parenting journey—listening to them, loving them, praying for them—we point them to the only true source of their strength in parenting. And as we invest in them and continually point them toward God, they are much better equipped to invest in and love and affirm their husband and children.

What happens at Mom to Mom is much like what Paul described in 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-8 (NIV): “We were gentle among you, as a nursing mother nurtures her own children. We cared so much for you that we were pleased to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become so dear to us.” When we follow God’s plan and respond to His call, He always surprises us! Those of us who have been in Mom to Mom for a while have been delighted—and often stunned—as we’ve watched God at work. We’ve seen moms come to Christ and bring their husbands and families to church—or back to church. We’ve seen broken marriages mended and “average” marriages revitalized and given new life. We’ve seen moms learn to love their children in new ways and seen struggling, hurting moms truly become “joyful mothers of children” (see Psalm 113:9, KJV). And how we Titus 2 Leaders have learned and grown and rejoiced in the process!

Who knows what God will do in your Mom to Mom group—and in *you*! I get excited just thinking about it. And I’m praying about it too—praying God will continue to do His great work among us as we love these dear moms and as we serve Him.

With an expectant—and joyful—heart,

Linda

Linda Schultz Anderson



What Is Mom to Mom?

A Biblically Based Ministry

Mom to Mom is a ministry rooted in God's directive found in Titus 2:3-4. *"Teach the older women to ... teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children"* (Titus 2:3-4, NIV).

In these verses we learn that God's plan is for the older women to teach and encourage the younger women to love their husbands and children. In His Word God gives His church many precepts for strengthening marriages, parenting, and the overall mission of the church. One of them is clearly stated in Titus 2:3-4. In the Mom to Mom ministry, the more experienced moms, who have traveled further on the marriage and childrearing journey, are called Titus 2 Leaders.

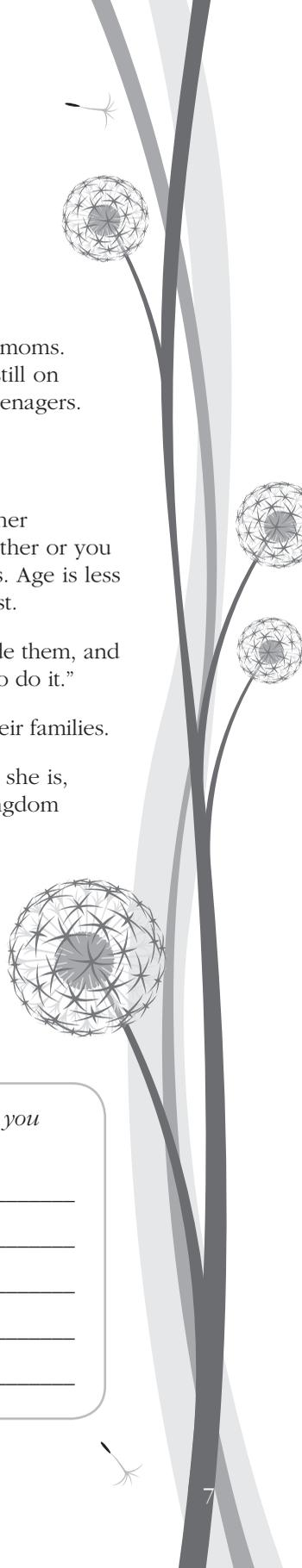
Because Titus 2 Leaders are the heartbeat of the ministry, you have a central role in making Mom to Mom:

- a safe place for Christians and non-Christians
- a comfortable place for all moms, whether married or single, and at all ages and stages of motherhood.
- a place to explore the purposes and promises God gives to parents

Mom to Mom provides the opportunity to encourage, energize, and equip one another as wives and mothers. Hopefully as moms become involved in this ministry, they will realize the enormity of their parenting task while recognizing more and more their need for resources beyond themselves. This need, we trust, will drive them to seek God and His help in parenting the children (babies through teenagers) that He has given them. Mom to Mom has been designed to minister to women on two levels:

1. To help already committed Christian women grow in godliness and in their effectiveness in nurturing Christ-centered families.
2. To encourage women who as yet have not made a commitment to Christ to see their need of Him as they explore their roles, responsibilities, and challenges as mothers.

What an opportunity!



What Is a Titus 2 Leader?

Titus 2 Leader Defined

Basically a Titus 2 Leader is a godly mentor to younger, less experienced moms. As a more experienced mom, you have much to offer to moms who are still on the parenting journey with their preschoolers, school-age children, and teenagers. Therefore a Titus 2 Leader can be described as:

1. A godly woman with a certain maturity of Christian experience.
2. An experienced mother who has traveled further down the road in her parenting than most of the attending moms. You may be a grandmother or you may still be parenting adolescents and perhaps some preadolescents. Age is less important than experience and a deep, abiding commitment to Christ.
3. A good listener. Moms need someone to listen to them, walk alongside them, and give them an occasional suggestion, not someone to “tell them how to do it.”
4. A compassionate, caring woman with a heart for young moms and their families.
5. A woman wise with God’s wisdom who can meet each mom where she is, see her with “our Father’s eyes,” and choose to love her into the kingdom and/or Christ likeness rather than to judge her.
6. A faithful, dependable woman who honors her commitments and will “hang in there for the long haul” with struggling moms.
7. A woman who has experienced enough of life’s difficulties that she refrains from offering “easy answers” to tough problems but instead responds with empathetic listening and godly wisdom.

Write one thing you have learned from your parenting experiences that you could share with younger moms:



Leading Your Small Group

Facilitating a group discussion and building camaraderie, trust, and commitment in a small group are no small tasks. In the light of the enormous challenge and the difference these groups can make in lives and families, the following observations and suggestions are offered regarding your groups.

Tips for Facilitating a Small Group

- Stick to the scheduled timetable, ending promptly.
- Develop a consistent opening tailored to your group. You may want to begin with sharing of what's gone on this week or with prayer. The first discussion question—"Report Time"—is designed to draw in every member of the group as you go around the table and give everyone a chance to "report in."
- Keep a Bible open and available to refer to the day's references.
- Focus on the discussion questions in the Member Book as your framework for guiding the discussion. This will help you steer clear of potentially controversial or divisive issues that may cause a seeker mom to feel uncomfortable. You may not find it necessary to ask every question if the discussion is heading in the right direction.
- Give each mom opportunity to speak and opportunity to listen.
- Appreciate the differences among your moms. Some will want to speak more than others. Some will want to listen more than they speak. Each mom should feel comfortable in the group, and no one person should be allowed to dominate discussion.
- Be sensitive to the feelings of the day within the group. Acknowledge these feelings, pray about them, and then move on to the day's discussion questions.
- Keep the conversation moving, watching the clock and guiding the discussion with the help of the questions.
- Accept the fact that we are not expected to be experts on each issue—or on any issue!
- Share your own experiences in mothering—both successes and failures, as appropriate. But avoid monopolizing the discussion with your own life stories.
- Move to a conclusion that gives each mom opportunity to share one area she would like to take action on in the upcoming week. The last discussion question (or the "For Next Week" feature) usually is designed to bring closure.

Always encourage moms:

- to refer to the "Reflections" page for that session in her Member Book or on her CD.
- to listen to that session's devotion on the CD in the back of her Member Book.



Tips for Encouraging Your Small Group

Encouraging Growth

1. Lead. Keep things moving toward a central theme. Ask yourself: “Do I have control? Am I led or leading? Do all of us leave with one common theme for the morning?” Think this out ahead of time. What do you want them to take away for the day?
2. Accept others as they are so they can move forward in growth. Ask yourself: “Does each woman leave feeling as if she is contributing to our group?” Some moms will readily share ideas and opinions. Some are not as secure in sharing openly with a group. Give them time as you continue to help each mom feel she has something to share.
3. Ask questions. Don’t lecture. Ask yourself: “Did I need to give my opinion or answer instead of hearing what they had discovered?”
4. Try to include each mom in the discussion. Ask yourself: “Did I try to draw everyone into the lesson or did a few—or I—do too much talking?”
5. Expect the group, not the leader, to explore the answer to each question. Refer the group back to appropriate principles and Scripture passages in the session outline.
6. Expect silence while people think through a question. Ask yourself: “Am I prone to answer my own questions when there is a moment of silence?” Remember that silence can be OK.
7. Feel free to share some of your experiences from time to time. A group will respond to the vulnerability and warmth of its leader. Ask yourself: “Am I believable? Do my moms see that I am challenged as I strive to become a more godly woman and mother just as they are challenged?”
8. Keep in mind questions moms in your group are asking themselves:
 - Do I belong here?
 - What can I expect?
 - What’s expected of me?
 - Can I trust this group?
 - Is this group going to work?
9. Set the tone so that each woman feels accepted, heard, and competent.
10. Give out signals of acceptance and belonging. Two things draw the moms together: commonality of life stage and heart-felt emotions. Moms benefit from sharing their lives and emotions with one another. Moms need each other.