

### Melcome

### IT'S TIME TO DIG A LITTLE DEEPER INTO INTIMACY AND INTENTIONALITY IN FRIENDSHIPS.

This Intentional Friendship Prayer journal was created to complement our blog post Into Me See: Intimacy In Real Friendships. Journaling is a great way to help you digest what you're learning through the written word. We hope you find this useful while learning more about intimacy and intentionality in friendships. Enjoy your journaling time!

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**Alicia Bowyer** 

### **Intentional Friendship Prayer Journal**

### **Intentional Friendship**

In this resource, you'll read small stories and quotes in the Bible about friendship, and in doing so, you're invited to journal your thoughts and pray about and for your friends.

It's wonderful to increase awareness of how relationships impact your life. With awareness, you can be more intentional about every friendship, creating more of what you want in your life and ultimately do more that brings you joy.

### **Early Friendships**

Early friendships had everything to do with physical proximity. Neighbor kids, kids on the school bus, kids in my class, kids on the playground, cousins, and friends of friends.

Friendships are sparked in shared situations. You play on the same sports team for years. You're paired for an art project. Or, if you're a rebel, you meet in a week of afterschool detention.

Jeanie, 35, from Ontario, says...

"As a kid, it never occurred to me to feel lonely or friendless. I knew my share of teasing and bullying, but I never felt alone at school or in the neighborhood. I had a sense of true connection with others. Friendship was natural – even easy."

| Did friendships come easily to you when you were young? |  |
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### **Teen Friendships**

As a young teen, friendships get more complicated and far less reliable. Teenage girls have the capacity for both extreme loyalty and flighty disloyalty.

Karla, 47, from Texas, says...

"In my freshman year, I found myself the focus of mean-spirited lies and spent several months doing my best to avoid a group of girls bent on making me miserable. I feared everything from getting tripped in the hallway to getting beat up in the schoolyard.

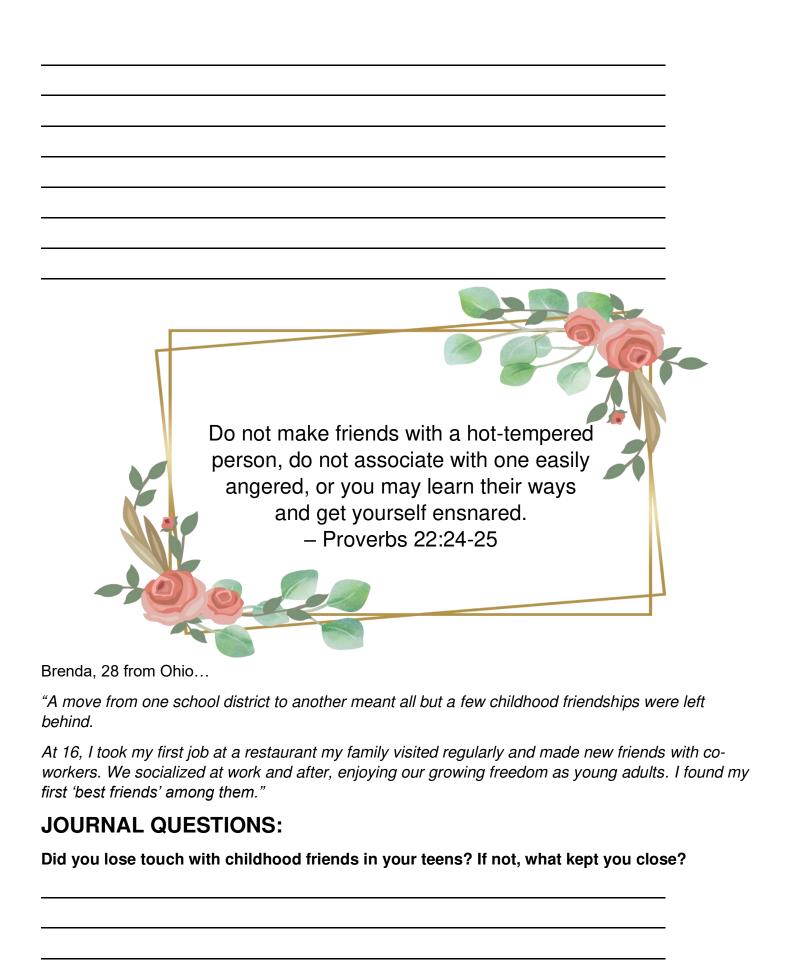
This situation, coupled with a rough home life, led to a brief stint as a teen runaway.

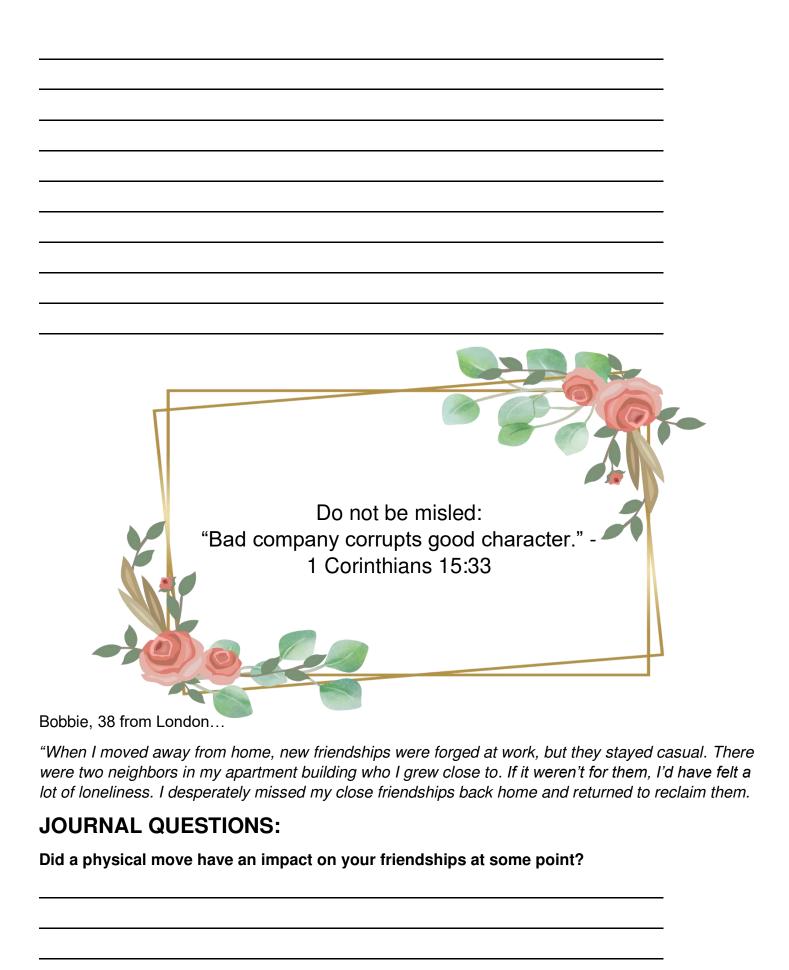
I returned the following school year determined to be 'too tough' to get picked on and ended up becoming someone else's nemesis – going so far as to assault her in the lunchroom physically.

One thing I'm grateful for was the urge to apologize to the girl and the opportunity to actually do it. There's no looking back and being proud of any part of it, but I'm glad I expressed sincere regret for my terrible behavior.

Knowing both sides of the bullying problem intimately, I can say they both stink."

| Did you ever exp | erience bullying | as a kid or tee | en?             |                |
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| oid you ever bul | ly someone else? | Have you ev     | er wanted to ma | ake apologies? |
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### Friends & Roommates

Vickie, 56 of Washington...

"I've had a lot of roommates over the years, and I gotta say, it isn't always easy to live with friends.

My first roommates were good friends from school, a newly married couple. We moved into a house together and agreed to split rent and expenses equally. In hindsight, living with a couple wasn't a great idea – and I soon realized the expense split was problematic.

As a non-meat eater and non-pet owner, I was frustrated to find their steaks and dog food on our 'shared grocery expense' list. That and many other dog-related complaints drove me to find my own place and ended our friendship when they resented me for leaving them responsible for 100% of the rent."

### **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:**

Have you ever had a problematic roommate situation spoil a friendship?

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| Broken Trust   |              |
| Ellen, 63, of Nevada, says   |              |
| "One of my closest friends trusted me with her deepest secret, an experience in her child later, I betrayed that secret with the best of misplaced intentions.                           | dhood. Years |
| It created more hurt than I could have ever imagined and completely destroyed the friend   | dship.       |
| I felt guilt and shame and wished I could turn time backward and erase my mistake more anything. I never found a time machine, but I did apologize and many years later learned myself." |              |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:   |              |
| Have you ever betrayed a friend?   |              |
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| Adulthood Shifts  |          |
| Angie, 39 of Florida  |          |
| "In my mid-twenties, I was working at home, running a daycare, mothering full time – and work creating regular proximity, I found I had little in common with most of the people I'd close to.                                      |          |
| I started asking myself why I was friends with any one individual. Was it because they w Warm? Good? Fun to be with? Did they make me feel accepted? Did they create more of life than positive things?                             |          |
| Again and again, the answers I came up with were disappointing.   |          |
| Another big move took me to a rural area half a state away from most friends and family with long connections to my life had moved there the year before, and it gave me the coknow I'd know at least one person in the new place." |          |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:  |          |
| Did you ever make such a significant life change you felt you were starting over?   |          |
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### **New Connections**

Beth, 38 of Minnesota...

"My first new friendships in a new place came from work. I spent a lot of time with the women in the office. They'd have a significant impact on my life in the next year.

I came to have great respect for one of the women, a single mom like me; we shared the usual set of difficult financial circumstances – yet she never seemed to succumb to complaining about things like I did.

It both intrigued and annoyed me that she seemed to find peace and comfort in her faith.

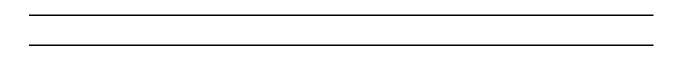
Not having been raised in church, having only been exposed to one 'crazy religious nut' in the family, I considered myself an atheist and had a heavy dose of disregard for anyone who tried to share their religion with me – which this friend did not do by the way.

She lived out her faith in a genuine way. When things were tough, I cursed and moaned about it. She never did. It wasn't that she didn't get angry or frustrated; she just managed it differently.

I wanted her to complain. I wanted to have long grumbling conversations about our boss, who obviously stiffed her paycheck. In my mind at the time, that was the essence of friendship, a shared experience with a common perspective. We're friends with people like us, who think the same things, and complain about the same situations... at least that's what I knew and felt comfortable with.

She wasn't interested in engaging with me that way, but she didn't push me away either. She patiently redirected my attention and our conversations to more hopeful views."

| ave you ever expe<br>ou see that you'd l | rienced a new<br>been unaware o | friendship cre<br>of before? | ating new sel | f-awareness in y | you? What o |
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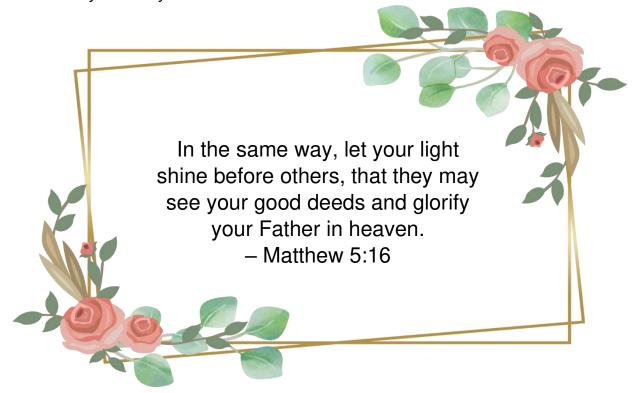
### **Peace Is Attractive**

Beth continues...

"The clearer my self-awareness became, the more I felt attracted to my new friend. So much so that I found myself interested in her faith views.

Her faith-filled trust in God's plan for her life was so appealing; she seemed to have a source of peace and even joy – and I wanted to know if I could too.

My friend's patient acceptance of me, completely untainted by religiosity and judgment, opened my heart and ultimately led to my salvation."



| Who has demothem? | onstrated peace | e and joy in su | ch a way that yo | ou wanted to spe | nd more time with |
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| Some Friendships Are Short  |                |
| Beth continues  |                |
| "Just as I was coming to faith, she moved away.   |                |
| The question on my mind at the time was, why bring her into my life just to take her away was ready to truly be discipled?  | v the minute I |
| I don't know if you get the humor in that. Of course, she'd been disciplining me all along.   |                |
| Looking back, I can guess God knew I'd have been too reliant on her, and He was creating where I would trust him to bring me new friends – which, of course, He did." | ng a season    |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:  |                |
| Have you ever been in a season of trusting God to bring friends into your life?   |                |
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### **Faith-Based Friendships**

Jordan, 45 of Kansas...

"As a new believer in my thirties, becoming part of a church was life-changing. Everything about it terrified me. Walking into the building that first Sunday, I felt incredible anxiety and fear of rejection.

I had no framework in my mind for understanding the dynamics of a church. In my imagination, I supposed everyone there had been a Christian since birth, and they knew each other as well as family. I knew Christians were supposed to welcome new believers on the surface, but we probably had a lot to prove to be accepted... right?

That might be true for some churches – who knows? Thankfully, it was far from reality in the church I chose to visit that day.

I felt warmly welcomed without being pounced upon. I discovered that the church was made up of more new believers than those who'd been raised as one. I couldn't have explained it, but I felt I belonged. As I looked around, I knew I was observing future friends. It was deeply moving."

### **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:**

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### **Serving Together**

Jordan continues...

"As I settled into the church family, I experienced the easy flow of making friends with people I spend a lot of time with.

If I had only ever attended church on Sunday mornings, it would have been difficult to forge real friendships. It was taking a place in the community that opened those doors. I made friends in bible study, serving in the church nursery, volunteering at the food pantry, and helping out with service projects."

### **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:**

| What opportunities to spend time with other people are you aware of right now? |
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Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

- Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

### **Opportunities Are Everywhere**

It's a recognizable theme throughout life, isn't it? Friends are found in shared experiences. Wherever you and other people are, seeds of friendship are being planted.

You can resist this, of course. You can withhold yourself, choosing to remain solitary even in a group of people. I've done plenty of that, to be honest.

### **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:**

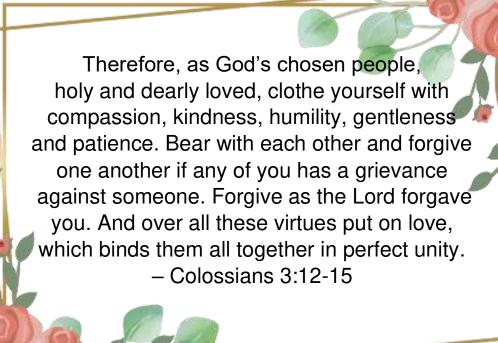
| What are some ways you withhold yourself from others? |  |  |  |  |  |
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Opening yourself up for true friendship is risky. We don't know whether we'll find kindred spirits in the people around us. We don't even know for sure the people we meet are trustworthy. They may not be at all.

They may be whiny and negative. They may be rough-spoken and inconsiderate. They may be hurt and anxious.

Or they may be wonderful, warm, and willing to put up with all of that in us.

We won't know if we don't open ourselves up to the possibilities.



| Think of a time when you know a friend accepted you, flaws and all. How did it fee |
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| What might happen if you friended someone who takes more patience and unders feels easy? | tanding than |
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### Friendships & Leadership

Phyllis, 51 of Maine...

"In serving at church, I found I had a capacity for leadership. Willing to take responsibility and share recognition with others, my volunteer roles led to a spot on the church staff for several years.

Being on staff created a wider circle of friendships for me. I considered other staff members, leadership, and members, my church family. My life seemed to sink into the fabric of the community – in a good way.

Sometimes relationships could be confusing for me. I couldn't tell if a relationship was a true friendship or if the person was spending time with me for other reasons. A couple of years in, I experienced a season of disillusionment – wondering if people were nice to me only because I was on staff. "

### **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:**

| Do you ever wonder if people are true friends or motivated by other reasons? |  |
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Phyllis continues...

"I found the most authenticity and trust in friendships with other women in leadership. We understood one another, the demands on our time, and the importance of keeping confidences.

There's a biblical model for friendship often shared in messages about discipleship. It's the concept of having a Timothy, a Paul, and a Barnabas in your life – or "being" one of them.

After Paul had his life-changing experience with Jesus, he came to the disciples, and they sent him to be taught by Barnabas. We don't really know how long Barnabas served as his mentor, but we can guess it was for a long while. Later, Paul served as a long-time mentor to Timothy.

I had many great mentor friendships and have been blessed to mentor many others. I truly never want to know a time where I don't have a 'Barnabas' and a 'Timothy' in my life."



## **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:** Who do you most relate to at this stage in your life? Timothy, Paul, or Barnabas? If you've been blessed by mentorship now or in the past, how have you expressed your appreciation?

| Have you found opportunities to be a mentor to someone else?  |   |
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| Online Friendships  |   |
| Kelly, 54 of Michigan   |   |
| "I picked up a side hustle to earn extra money and discovered a new source of friendship know other women seeking the same. Since my business ventures were all focused on t started to make a lot of friends online on web forums and discussion groups. |   |
| These friendships grew just like any in the real world. We spent time together communic things that mattered to us. We worked on projects together, did favors for each other, an each other's goals.   | _ |
| I enjoyed fantastic friendships and even business partnerships with women I'd never one person for nearly ten years. They were warm, even intimate, friendships – most of which way. "  |   |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:  |   |
| Have you enjoyed warm online friendships?   |   |
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| Taking Online Friendships Offline   |                |
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| Kelly continues   |                |
| "One thing I never expected when I first started to build an online business was that I'd of to travel and spend time with people in person. Way back, I couldn't imagine being able to finances and partly because I looked at my business as a side gig only. As that change finances grew, options opened up, and I went for it. | to, partly due |
| Business conferences offered me the chance to travel and meet many online friends in pa fantastic moment to get a hug from a woman you've known only as words on a screen the phone for so long.  |                |
| I wouldn't have said anything was missing from our friendships before we met in person, experienced the living, breathing, eating, drinking, laughing people – I was hooked. Since event, I've made travel a must several times a year."  |                |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:  |                |
| Have you had the chance to meet online friends in person? Do you want to?   |                |
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| Friendships & Business Partnerships  |
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| Lee, 28 of Sydney  |
| "Every business partnership I've been in either started with or created a valued friendship. Some partnerships are short-term, built around a project with a clear beginning and end. Others have been long-term, lasting for years.                                     |
| When money blends into friendship, there's always the potential for trouble. If either partner is less than reliable and trustworthy, you have a difficult situation to navigate. It's not unusual for friendships to fall under the weight of failed business projects. |
| I've been blessed; I've never lost a friend to a partnership, and I hope I never do. I've seen it happen for others, though. "   |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:   |
| Have you ever lost a friend in the process of doing business?  |
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| Keeping Friendships Alive  |  |
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| Brenda, 63 of Georgia  |  |
| "In my life, no friendships have survived from childhood. I can't think of even one person I from teens that I keep in touch with. Even looking back 15 years or so, I'm amazed at the close relationships I once knew that I haven't followed up on in ages." |  |
| Friendships require intentionality to keep them alive.   |  |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:   |  |
| Is there any childhood or teen friends you'd really like to check on?  |  |
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### **One Way Friendships**

**JOURNAL QUESTIONS:** 

Some relationships seem to get lopsided. One friend initiates connection repeatedly, and if it doesn't come from them, it doesn't happen.

These friendships can be confusing for the person doing all the initiating. So long as you keep it going, it's warm enough to satisfy, but something is lacking. The constant need to be the one who makes things happen can take a toll.

| ave you been in a lopsided friendship? |  |
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### **Overdependence On Digital Connections**

Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks invited us all to connect online, and it seems like a great thing on the surface. Being able to share and see photos and updates from each other quickly is lovely.

Has it gone too far, though? Have you connected more online lately than in person?

Does the constant state of 'knowing' what's going on keep us from calling to check in on each other?

Has clicking "like" replaced actually getting together for a cup of coffee?

| Do you feel like you've relied too much on digital contact?           |
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| What would you like to do to create more in person time with friends? |
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| Feeling Lonely & Wishing For Friends   |             |
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| It seems clear it's easier to make friends when you're young, and they come easier when a lot of time with people, whether it's at work, church, or volunteering.                    | n you spend |
| There are seasons of life when we're more solitary or when we feel alone with other peofor many reasons. It's tough making friends when you look around and see few opportunkinship. |             |
| JOURNAL QUESTIONS:   |             |
| Do you feel a lack of friendships in your life?  |             |
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### Friendship Envy

Sort of like you see sweet loving couples everywhere when you're feeling especially single - when you're craving friends, you see friendships all around you.

You look around at work and see other people getting together for lunch and wish you'd be included. Maybe you've even expressed interest and been disappointed when you weren't invited along.

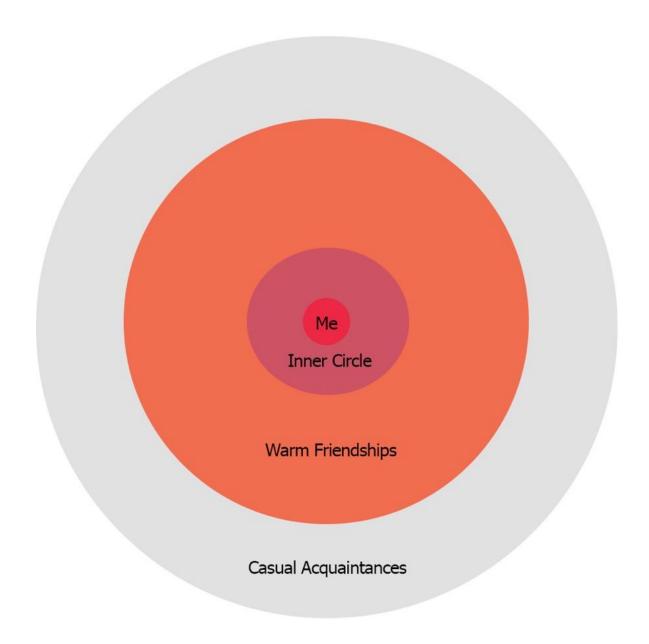
You see 'cliques' of women at church and in the community and wonder what it takes to break in and be accepted.

# **JOURNAL QUESTIONS:** Do you feel a part or excluded from any tight groups of friends? What contributes to your sense of belonging or exclusion?

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| Finding Friendship  |          |
| If getting new friends is high on your wish list, let's look at what exactly you're looking for. W<br>are you looking to fulfill? | /hat nee |
| Someone to talk to & hang out with?   |          |
| Someone to do specific activities with?   |          |
| Where are you likely to find people who enjoy the same things as you?   |          |
| What sort of things would you and your hubby enjoy doing with other couples if you're marri                                       | ed?      |
| Journal Questions:  |          |
| If you're part of a couple, do you crave couple friendships?  |          |
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### Friendship Zones of Intimacy

What are you really saying about the relationship when you call someone a friend?



### **Using The Friendship Journal Pages**

Use the following pages as a personal evaluation tool. Explore how you feel about your friendships and pray for the relationships.

| Friend's Name:  |
|---|
| How long have you been friends?   |
| ☐ Inner Circle ☐ Warm Friendship ☐ Casual Acquaintance                                    |
| When you think about this friendship, is there a moment in time that stands out?          |
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| On average, over the course of your friendship, what kind of impact does she have on you? |
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| When I am with her, I feel:   |
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| When I spend time with her, I tend to:  |
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| If something between us is bothering me, I will:  |

| When I'm feeling low, I can rely on her to:            |
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| When I'm celebrating good things, I can expect her to: |
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| My prayer for this friendship is:                      |
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| Friend's Name:  |
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| How long have you been friends?   |
| ☐ Inner Circle ☐ Warm Friendship ☐ Casual Acquaintance                                    |
| When you think about this friendship, is there a moment in time that stands out?          |
|   |
| On average, over the course of your friendship, what kind of impact does she have on you? |
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|   |
| When I am with her, I feel:   |
|   |
| When I spend time with her, I tend to:  |
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|   |
| If something between us is bothering me, I will:  |

| When I'm feeling low, I can rely on her to:            |
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| When I'm celebrating good things, I can expect her to: |
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| My prayer for this friendship is:                      |
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| When I'm feeling low, I can rely on her to:            |
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| When I'm celebrating good things, I can expect her to: |
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| My prayer for this friendship is:                      |
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| Friend's Name:  |
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| How long have you been friends?   |
| ☐ Inner Circle ☐ Warm Friendship ☐ Casual Acquaintance                                    |
| When you think about this friendship, is there a moment in time that stands out?          |
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| On average, over the course of your friendship, what kind of impact does she have on you? |
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## Congratulations!

You completed the Intentional Friendship journal!

Our hope is that you will grow more from your friendships and be able to make them more intimate and intentional. God bless you as you cultivate your friendships.



## Join Our Facebook Group For Friendly Accountability And Community



The Christian Women's Corner private Facebook group was created with you in mind. CWC's goal is to provide and facilitate encouragement, accountability, and community for Christian women.

The CWC private Facebook group includes both Christian Women's Corner and Good Morning Girls resources.

What is Good Morning Girls?

Good Morning Girls meets online daily to keep each other accountable in God's word and in prayer as we read through the Bible cover to cover just one chapter a day.

We're excited and hope you will join our private Facebook group to start reading the word of God daily and have the accountability to keep up this habit and read through the entire Bible with us.

To find out more about the Christian Women's Corner Facebook group, please click the green button below.



## **About The Author**



Alicia Bowyer created Christian Women's Corner after talking to a good friend one day. They discussed how hard it was to keep up with daily prayer, Bible reading, and telling others about Jesus who didn't share their faith. She knew that some might not struggle with these three things, but many do.

She wanted to take the knowledge that she gained from over 40 years on her Christian walk and help others.

Alicia lives in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, with her family, whom she loves dearly.

To find out more, visit: www.ChristianWomensCorner.com