

Chapter Five: Being Relational is Being Redefined

How are you interacting and empowering teens as they engage with social media?

If you are a **parent**, begin to explore how you can have a presence or relationship with your teen through texting or social media. Also, think about how you can empower your teen by becoming the learner and walk with them through the realm of the technological advancements.

If you are a **senior pastor**, consider: how are you moving the church as a whole to engage in the social media sphere, as this is not just a teen reality but something that the Church needs to lead the way in as we engage the young adult generation? How are you enabling church to be a more interactive and empowering experience?

If you are a **church member**, consider: young people are looking to belong, have opportunities to lead, and have adults invest into their lives. Is there a way to build relationships with the youth people in your church through intentional mentoring, giving them a role in the business you are working in, empowering them in leadership roles within the church, or simply being deliberate in making regular conversation with them when you see them at church, even if you aren't a youth worker?

If you are a **youth worker**:

- i. Create a Facebook page for your youth to administrate
- ii. Use your large group gathering times as interactive learning opportunities where youth are engaged in teaching each other.
- iii. Spend at least an hour on Facebook each day sending encouraging messages to teens you know from your ministry and simply entering into their world.
- iv. Ask yourself if you are maximizing your connection with your teens through the resource of text messaging.

The point youth worker and a member of the senior church leadership should take some time to think strategically in the following areas:

- a. Expectation on social media connection with youth and how social media would be a useful tool for the church as a whole.
- b. The disconnect between the youth ministry and the larger experience of church when it comes to the interactive learning and relationship building through social media. (Remember that transitions are the great points of losing people; the more we bridge the transition to similar experiences the greater the likelihood of people staying connected.)