



Day 23

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

— 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Take a Risk

What struggle is most sapping your strength right now? Is it an illness? A heartbreak? A shaky season at work?

A friend of mine, Hannah, is walking a difficult journey with her young adopted son. Put into foster care at the age of four, this little boy has experienced trauma that would bring tears to your eyes. And while adopting him has been an incredible blessing to Hannah, it has also been very hard. As she tries to help her son heal, he often dishes out his worst behavior on her because she is the person he feels safest with.

Hannah's life is exhausting in a way that few understand unless they've lived it themselves. It is lonely. The same is true of your struggles, and mine. God often has people designated to walk with us, but how can we find them? We have to be willing to open up and take the risk of reaching out to those whom God might have put in our lives.

A year or so after Hannah adopted her son, she was discouraged and praying for answers. She met another adoptive mom at the park who seemed nice, and they struck up a conversation. They traded a few

stories, not sharing much. Then my friend tentatively opened up with a very real, raw question. "The therapy. So much therapy, right?" She hoped that this rope she was throwing would be caught, gripped tightly, and pulled to shore by a woman who might know just what type of life she was living.

Hannah's rope was caught. The woman turned to her in excitement that someone else might get her life! From that point on a best-friendship was born that has become a lifeline for both of them. They've been able to bounce ideas off each other, share strategies, and pray for each other. They've been able to comfort each other as they walk similar paths and encourage each other to keep going. They do life together. And it all started with that brave, vulnerable moment.

You never know when your biggest challenge in life could be a common thread that cements a friendship you both need desperately. No matter your situation, be willing to put yourself out there and pray that God will provide people you can love and encourage—and likewise, who can love and encourage you back.