

Sharing *Faith & Strength*, Bk 1 and/or Bk 2 With Your Teen

A Mentor's Guide to Encouragement, Conversation, and Connection

FIRST, Remember This:

As a mentor, coach, youth leader, aunt, or trusted adult, you have something incredibly powerful:

You aren't her parent. You aren't trying to fix her. You aren't giving a diagnosis.

That means you often have the opportunity to encourage, affirm, and speak into her life in ways that feel different and sometimes easier to receive.

Your goal isn't to "teach" her this book.
You're simply saying:

"I see something special in you, and I wanted you to have this." Or "I care about you, I believe in you, and I thought this might encourage you on your journey."

SECOND, here are some different types of approaches. Find what YOU are comfortable with.

***The Encourager**

You naturally notice strengths in young people and enjoy helping them recognize gifts and qualities they may not see in themselves.

What you might say:

"One of the things I've always admired about you is that you keep showing up, even when life gets hard. I saw this book and thought some of the ideas might encourage you the same way you've encouraged others."

Or try saying:

"I thought this book might be another voice reminding you of how much strength you already have. Just flip through and see what speaks to you."

Nonverbal Idea:

Write a short note inside the cover:

"I hope this reminds you of what I've already seen in you for a long time: strength, courage, and a lot of potential. I also hope this is there to encourage you on the hard days."

***The Conversation Builder**

You and your teen already enjoy talking about life, faith, friendships, school, or the future together.

What you might say:

"I actually wish I had something like this when I was your age. Some of these topics reminded me of conversations we've already had."

Or try saying:

"You don't have to read it all. Maybe just flip through it and see if anything jumps out at you. I'd love to hear what you think if you ever want to talk about it."

Nonverbal Idea:

Place a sticky note on a chapter that reminds you of a previous conversation:
"This section made me think about our conversation last month.."

***The Cheerleader**

You tend to be the person who celebrates, encourages, and reminds others that they're capable of more than they realize.

What you might say:

"I know you're carrying a lot right now, and I wanted you to have something that's encouraging, practical, and honest."

Or try saying:

"I don't think you need more pressure. I think you deserve more support, and I thought this might provide some."

Nonverbal Idea:

Include a pretty card that says:
"For the days when you feel strong, and especially for the days when you don't."

***The Faith Mentor**

Your relationship naturally includes conversations about faith, purpose, identity, and spiritual growth.

What you might say:

"One of the coolest things I admire most about you is your willingness to keep growing and asking hard questions. I thought this might be another way God could encourage you."

Or try saying:

"I don't expect you to agree with every page. I just hope there are moments that remind you who God says you are."

Nonverbal Idea:

Bookmark a favorite Scripture passage and add:

"Praying that you always remember whose you are and how deeply you are loved."

***The "I've Been There Too" Mentor**

You connect best by sharing your own experiences, struggles, mistakes, and lessons learned.

What you might say:

"Honestly, there are parts of this book that I still need as an adult. Being a teenager was hard, and being an adult isn't always easy either."

Or try saying:

"I thought you might appreciate knowing that a lot of us have struggled with these same feelings, even if we didn't always talk about them."

Nonverbal Idea:

Add a simple, handwritten note:

"I wish someone had told me at your age that I didn't have to have everything figured out. You don't either."

One Final Thought

She may read this tonight. She may read it six months from now. She may quietly place it on a shelf until she reaches a moment when she needs it.

All that's okay.

Because the greatest gift a mentor often gives isn't advice. It's the quiet message:

"I see you. I believe in you. And I'll still be here tomorrow."

Thanks for the hours you pour into her.

I would love to hear about your experience. Send me a quick note to drevajames@faithandstrengthforgirls.com

-Dr. James