

Research on Social Networking and Bridging the Age gap.

One way of engaging people more, and making a bigger impact on communities, would be to take a look at <http://mentoringbrothers.org/>, which is a mentoring portal provided Big Brothers Big Sisters in the USA, which is one of the oldest one to one youth mentoring services. It is developing positive relationships that have a lasting impact on children's lives.

This also, I am sure, encourages bridging relationships between Christian's, brothers and sisters, who can transfer life skills.

The digital age and the breaking of the "digital divide", now presents a new problem, which is a bigger gap between the youth and our patriarchs and matriarchs of our society. The youth are more glued to their computer screens, social networks, mobile phones, gaming consoles & television, which breaks down the transfer of wisdom and interaction from the older school of thought and their very important role in society.

I was thinking, if it would be worthwhile to look at a social network model (there are many platforms), setup up by churches, which trains and supports the senior citizens to engage with the youth. This can be done using a email/chat facility, and through different types of mentoring, i.e. life skills, business/career, spirituality, relationships etc.

Our senior citizens in our churches, have so much to offer, but are so often discarded from day to day interaction with the youth. In this day and age, it is more imperative to have a strong Christian mentor (or mentors), and someone to confide in, especially due to broken homes, poverty, dysfunctional family situations.

It is also a good win-win situation, as the mere involvement and interaction with the youth, would provide senior citizens with being more actively engaged with their community, and the youth with an impetus of pearls of wisdom, and for both, rebuilding positive relationships.

Just something on my mind, and thought it would be something positive for transformation.

Your comments?

I have been doing a bit of research on mentoring between the young and older generation and good reasons for transferring these old traditional values, and visa versa

See: <http://ezinearticles.com/?Mentoring-The-Younger-Generation---Reasons-To-Transfer-Old-Values&id=1657120>

On what applications there are on online mentoring , and why online mentoring using the Internet is effective see:

<http://www.elearnmag.org/subpage.cfm?section=articles&article=95-1>

A good example of online mentoring is a site which and service which is more for education, but could be using in our Christian context of bridging, see:

http://www.icouldbe.org/standard/public/in_international_programs.asp

on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/pages/icouldbeorg/180289083079>

Also take a look at <http://www.caringbridge.org>, as an example of care and mentoring.

<http://www.bridging.org/> mission is to provide the economically disadvantaged with a one-time gift of quality furniture and household items which helps to stabilize and improve their lives while effectively using community resources. Through a network of over 180 social service [agencies](#), eligible clients are referred to their warehouse for shopping for these needs

Some of the ideas on purpose are:

See a good example with www.kiva.org. Kiva's mission is to connect people, through lending, for the sake of alleviating poverty. This is a fine example of co-creation.

Kiva empowers individuals to lend to an entrepreneur across the globe. By combining microfinance with the internet, Kiva is creating a global community of people connected through lending, with purpose.

Jesus gave of himself, and mingled with all types. He did not judge and gave with love and purpose. We should see this type of social network give this to communities and the world with purpose. God's gift of love, care, life and prosperity. Prosperity can come in all different forms, one of them being mentoring.

So, what could be the 3 B's for a bridging social network?

Bridging: Communities, poverty, cultures, age gaps, rich & poor, countries

Breaking: Perceptions, poverty, class distinction, the young and the old

Building: hope, dignity, people and communities

We need to refine a strategy and get it down to:

The What? For e.g. connecting people with God,s purpose using the 3 B's

The How? For e.g. Through a social dignified network platform, to mentor between all ages, to encourage the word of God and enhance His God given gifts (Intellectual Capital), of music and art writing (blogs) and Christian education. (Underlying this is a philosophy of community service to help spread the Word, in areas such as science and technology, education, global public health, the environment, youth advocacy, mentorship and the arts which could be written in the business plan)

The Who? -> a user-generated database of the global community.

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