

But what do we talk about?

It can often be intimidating to talk to strangers, especially when you are aware of their circumstances. What do you say to a woman living in a shelter with her kids? Can you ask about her day? Can you ask about her kids? Is it ok to ask why they are staying at the Durham Rescue Mission and how they feel about it? What about the men? What do we ask them? The gap created because of our life circumstances seems so big that I don't know where to start.

The answer to all of these questions is easier than you might think.

These men and women enjoy any moment of positive interaction they get, and they are ready to share their stories. Perhaps the biggest blessing of the night is not that you brought them food, but you brought yourself and your willingness to share an evening with them. Share your life as well. Share about your kids, your work, your favorite tv shows.

Yes, it is hard, and it is intimidating, but you will quickly find that once you get over that initial fear or hurdle set before you, the conversation starts rolling.

Conversation Ideas:

Introduce yourself.

Ask them who they are.

Ask about their name, did it have special significance?

Ask about their kids, and their kids names.

Ask how long they have been at the Durham Rescue Mission.

Are they in the Victory Program? Ask them for details about the program.

Ask about their day. Was it a good one? Why? Why not?

Ask about their plans for the future. Do they want to go to college one day? Trade school?

Ask about their extended family. Where are they? Do they see them often? Ever?

Ask about their favorite TV shows. Do they watch The Office? American Idol?

What job do they do at the mission? Do they enjoy it?

What do they enjoy about the mission? What do they dislike?

Do they read books? Have they read any good books lately?

What was childhood like for them? Where did they grow up?