

My “GB” Relationship

Enjoy this guest post by my first God Buddy, Bill, who describes how our “GB” relationship got started. –Rich, your chief God Buddy

The first time I met Rich was at our church with a simple ‘hi’. We had no real conversation except to exchange this casual greeting. I remember he was much younger, so we really didn’t have much in common (*or so I thought*). Little did I know at that time what God had in store for us.



I believe nothing in life is left to chance. God had a purpose

in that initial greeting. Plans for both of us. In Jeremiah 29:11, God said, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you..."

The next encounter I had with Rich was a few weeks later on the golf course. He was with another group of guys on another hole and my tee shot ended up next to Rich's tee shot. I was on the wrong fairway and thought he would be thinking, "boy, that guy is a terrible golfer". But as I approached my ball, Rich recognized me and we simultaneously pretended to get upset with each other for the benefit of the others in our foursomes who did not know we knew each other. It was then that the deeper connection between us began.

A few months later, my wife and I were invited to join a small monthly dinner group with some members of our church. Rich and his wife were also members of that group. Being the perceptive guy that he is, Rich noticed I was stressed with some personal issues that I shared with our table. He had been dealing with some work-life balance issues himself and pulled me aside to another room a bit later to ask if I wanted to talk. He listened without judging or "trying to fix" anything. He just listened. He then explained his new concept of God Buddies and how he felt we could be of help to each other.

As they say, the rest is history.

Rich and I have been God Buddies for almost 20 years. Sometimes we meet weekly for coffee or a beer, sometimes it is monthly, sometimes by phone, but always to "check in" or when we just need to talk. Occasionally our conversations are meaningless about football or baseball (I'm a Cubs fan, he is a White Sox fan) and even politics. Other times, these

conversations are deep and meaningful, like issues raising our sons, our extended families, job changes, cultural issues, dealing with loss of parents, my retirement and/or how to find purpose in life. At some point, we started referring to each other as "GB". It just seemed so natural.

You might be asking yourself but "Why aren't you talking about these issues with your wives?" We are and we do. But having a male God Buddy is different.

Rich and I both are blessed with loving and supportive wives. My wife and I have been married for 47 years and she understands the importance of my having a God Buddy like Rich in my life. She understands and appreciates the importance of Christian men having other Christian men in their lives, just like I understand the importance of her having Christian women in her life.

But having another guy who understands issues from a "guy's perspective" can help. That's one reason Rich and I are so good for each other.

At a retreat several years ago, I was presenting a talk to a group of guys in which I mentioned the God Buddy concept and what it has meant to me. At the conclusion, one of the men came up to me and wanted to know more about this concept. He was looking for that kind of relationship. Today, he and I are also God Buddies. Since both of us are retired, we meet almost weekly for coffee. You can and should have a few GBs as each will be different.

Developing and maintaining deep relationships takes time and effort but the rewards greatly exceed the effort.

Rich and my relationship has grown and deepened in the past 20 years. We admit that we have not always had the answers nor have always been on the same page but we have dealt with issues together and “sharpened” each other (see Proverbs 27:17).

Life is messy but one thing I have come to understand is the importance of having a God Buddy in my life. God certainly had a plan when he introduced Rich to me 20 years ago.

I urge all men to look for a God Buddy and be open to what God has in store for the both of you. It could change the way you look at your life.