



LEADERSHIP BY DESIGN:

**The Blueprint for Intentional
Friendship and Service**

SISTER CIRCLES: The Blueprint for Effective Mentoring Relationships

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Why This Conversation Matters at a Links Area Leadership Conference?

In The Links, we lead even when we are exhausted as mentors, mentees, and sisters.

- Our friendships become lifelines
- Our trust becomes protection
- Our sisterhood is what keeps us standing and ensures no woman carries leadership alone

This is how we care for ourselves while caring for the work.

Let's Pause. Go into pairs:

- Where have relationships and mentorship mattered most in your leadership journey?
- Are there examples in your Leadership journey where Links values have guided

What Is a Sister Circle?

- A trusted community of women rooted in friendship
- Built on emotional safety and shared accountability
- Where mentoring is mutual and evolving
- Where leadership is practiced through relationship, not title

Sister Circles are Intentional Spaces of Sisterhood Where Leadership Grows

What a Sister Circle Is / Is Not

A Sister Circle IS:

- Intentional
- Honest
- Supportive and challenging
- Focused on growth, service, and legacy

A Sister Circle IS NOT:

- Gossip
- Groupthink
- One-way advice
- Title-based authority

Which of the NOTs have challenged you most? Would you add anything to either category?

Traditional vs Sister Circle Mentorship

Traditional Mentorship:

- One-directional
- Advice-driven
- Hierarchical
- Often short-term

Sister Circle Mentorship:

- Reciprocal
- Conversation-based
- Relationship-centered
- Evolves over time



Mentorship in Action through Sister Circles/Friendship

Tough Love Comes from Presence, Not Position

As you watch this video listen for accountability is delivered?

Video Link:

[Tough Love](#)

What made tough love possible in this relationship?

The Sister Circle Blueprint

Effective Sister Circle mentoring rests on four pillars:

Intentionality  explicitly naming the relationship

Psychological Safety  protecting honesty

Truth-Telling with Care  challenging with love

Legacy Consciousness  preparing what comes next

Now that we've seen Sister Circles in action, let's discuss how we sustain them

Intentionality: Defining the Relationship

Intentional mentoring means:

- Explicitly naming the relationship
- Clarifying purpose and expectations
- Agreeing on how you engage and grow
- Allowing the relationship to evolve

Great mentoring does not happen by accident...It happened through clarity, care and choice.

Choosing a Mentee should be intentional

- A great mentee is not perfect, she is willing.
- A great mentee is:
 - Curious
 - Open to feedback
 - Willing to grow
 - Committed to the work
- Potential matters more than polish.

Choosing Mentoring Relationships Intentionally

Video:

[Intentional Selection](#)

- Mentorship as a conscious choice
- Seeking alignment over convenience
- Designing relationships inside Sister Circles

Reflection: What criteria have you used, consciously or unconsciously, when choosing mentors or mentees?

Legacy in Mentorship

Legacy-centered mentoring considers:

- Who am I preparing, not just helping?
- What must continue beyond me?
- How do I create space for future leadership?

This is one important way The Links sustain impact across generations

Designing & Strengthening Sister Circles

The Design

Build: Create circles based on shared purposes and need

Strengthen: Deepen trust within our chapters and your other networks

Sustain Carry sisterhood inside and outside The Links

Discussion in pairs:

- What currently exists?
- What needs strengthening?
- Where must we be more intentional?

Commitment & Continuity

Before you leave, identify and write a note to self:

- One relationship you will intentionally name
- One action you will take to strengthen a Sister Circle
- One way you will extend this work in your chapter or the Southern Area

Leadership by design requires follow-through.

In Closing

Sister Circles are how we:

- Lead with intention
- Mentor with purpose
- Sustain excellence
- Extend the legacy of The Links, Incorporated

The Final Word

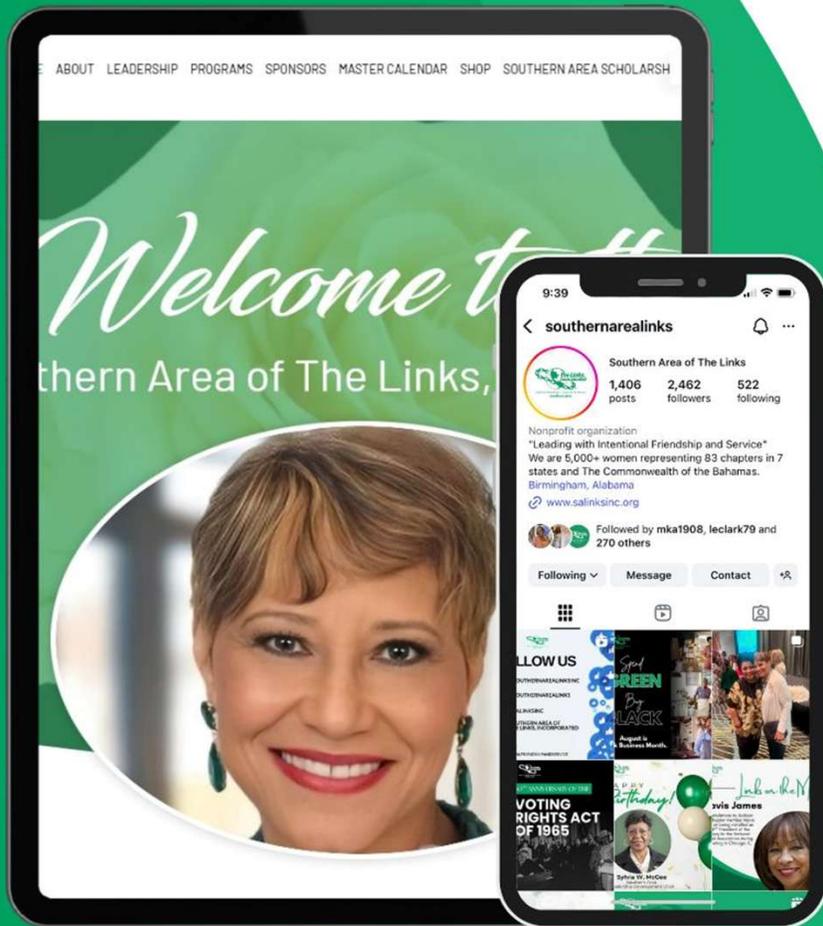
By Design

- Reflection: What are you intentionally building through your Sister Circles? How are you supporting your sisters, your friends, your mentees & mentors?

**Any
Questions?**



Join The Conversation



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Thank You!



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