STAR Series

For Congregational Leaders

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

TASK: The following key themes focus on understanding generational differences, authentic storytelling, gentle conversation techniques, experiential learning, and emphasizing process over prescriptive answers—all essential for meaningful **spiritual formation** with young adults.

Key Principles for Spiritual Formation with Young Adults

1 UNDERSTAND UNIQUE SPIRITUAL NEEDS

Today's twentysomethings are digitally native, authenticity-driven, and justice-oriented. They're skeptical of institutional authority and crave vulnerable, relational depth. Many are deconstructing inherited faith but remain open to reconstructing something deeper and more authentic. Their spiritual formation resources must be accessible online, tied to meaningful action, and address issues like racial justice, mental health, and climate change.

2 SHARE WITH HUMILITY AND BOUNDARIES

When sharing your story, match the folks you serve by having three iterations. We use the analogy of coffee. Have a decaf coffee story that is share your openness to connect but does not include a push or an expectation. Then, have a coffee-with-cream story that opens up your own life and allows for storytelling to lead to a stronger connection. Finally, have an espresso story ready. This is where you can connect through your personal experiences and offer vulnerable moments.

Use Gentle Conversation Starters

Open spiritual discussions with non-pushy questions that invite reflection: "When do you feel most like yourself?" or "What gives your life meaning right now?" Ask about wonder and mystery: "Have you ever had a moment that felt sacred?" Explore values and purpose: "What values feel non-negotiable in your spiritual journey?" Use sentence starters like, "When I was younger, I used to believe..." or "One question I still wrestle with is..."

3 MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES BEYOND CONVERSATIONS

For those seeking more structure, design immersive spiritual experiences: spiritual retreats focused on stillness and story, "Sacred Questions" nights with deep discussions, mentorship circles pairing young adults with older mentors, faith and justice immersions connecting spirituality with action, and spiritual identity workshops exploring "What's my story?" and "What am I called to?"

4 PRIORITIZE PROCESS OVER ANSWERS

Each experience should include space for processing, sharing, and asking questions—not just teaching. Remember that spiritual formation happens anywhere in community. Set manageable goals like hosting one quarterly event or sharing your story monthly. Focus on walking with young adults on their unique journey rather than pushing them toward your level of spirituality.



s.t.a.r. FOR YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

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ROADMAP

Curriculum Domain, Competency and Task Constellations

STAR Domain:	Listening
Associated Competency:	Relationship building and Compassion
Associated Task:	Equanimity

STAR Domain:	Young Adult Leadership
Associated Competency:	Resourcefulness and Communication
Associated Task:	Recruiting

STAR Domain:	Faith Journey
Associated Competency:	Creating Trust
Associated Task:	**Spiritual formation**

STAR Domain:	Culture
Associated Competency:	Adaptability
Associated Task:	Embracing failure

STAR Domain:	Intergenerational Connections
Associated Competency:	Mentorship
Associated Task:	Generational literacy and Digital literacy

STAR Domain:	Community
Associated Competency:	Authenticity and Inclusivity
Associated Task:	Managing conflict

STAR Domain:	Church Leadership
Associated Competency:	Influence and Purpose
Associated Task:	Creating buy-in

STAR Domain:	Frameworks, Programs, & Events
Associated Competency:	Learning
Associated Task:	Sticky programs and Measure and assess