

Mentoring

Matters

Second Edition



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for [Mosaic House Ministries](#) and [The Mosaic Initiative](#) January 2026

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The links to resources in this manual are active and accurate as of Spring 2026. Since agencies move documents and modify websites periodically, you may find that a link won't take you to the indicated resource. In that case, you can often find the resource by searching on the title in Google and selecting what seems the best "hit".

Mentoring Handbook:
*Connecting Mentors, Youth & Young Adults
Toward Whole Life Discipleship
(Second Edition)*

Linda Cannell

What is Mentoring?

A Brief Overview

Mentoring is a relationship between two or more people that is built on mutual trust and appropriate confidentiality. It provides opportunity for mentors and those being mentored to grow personally, spiritually and vocationally.

Informal mentoring relationships emerge when a third party “nudges” two or more people together; or when someone who desires the benefit of another, typically older, person’s experience and knowledge invites them to be a mentor.

Formal mentoring relationships result from more or less structured matches in the context of a mentoring program. Leadership typically provides training and support for all participants in the relationship. Peer mentoring relationships are most often informal. An arrangement develops between age mates, (typically), where one familiarizes the other with a new role, shares knowledge and experience, and provides personal support.

Effective mentoring relationships provide a safe environment for reflection and trying out new ideas, skills, spiritual practices, and vocational options. Effective mentoring relationships promote shared learning, encourage mutual development, and provide support as needed. The mentor journeys alongside and is focused on assisting the development of the youth or young adult by helping to promote change and clarify perspectives. They use questions and active listening to assist mentees to sort out problems, and provide support in significant life transitions.

A FINAL WORD

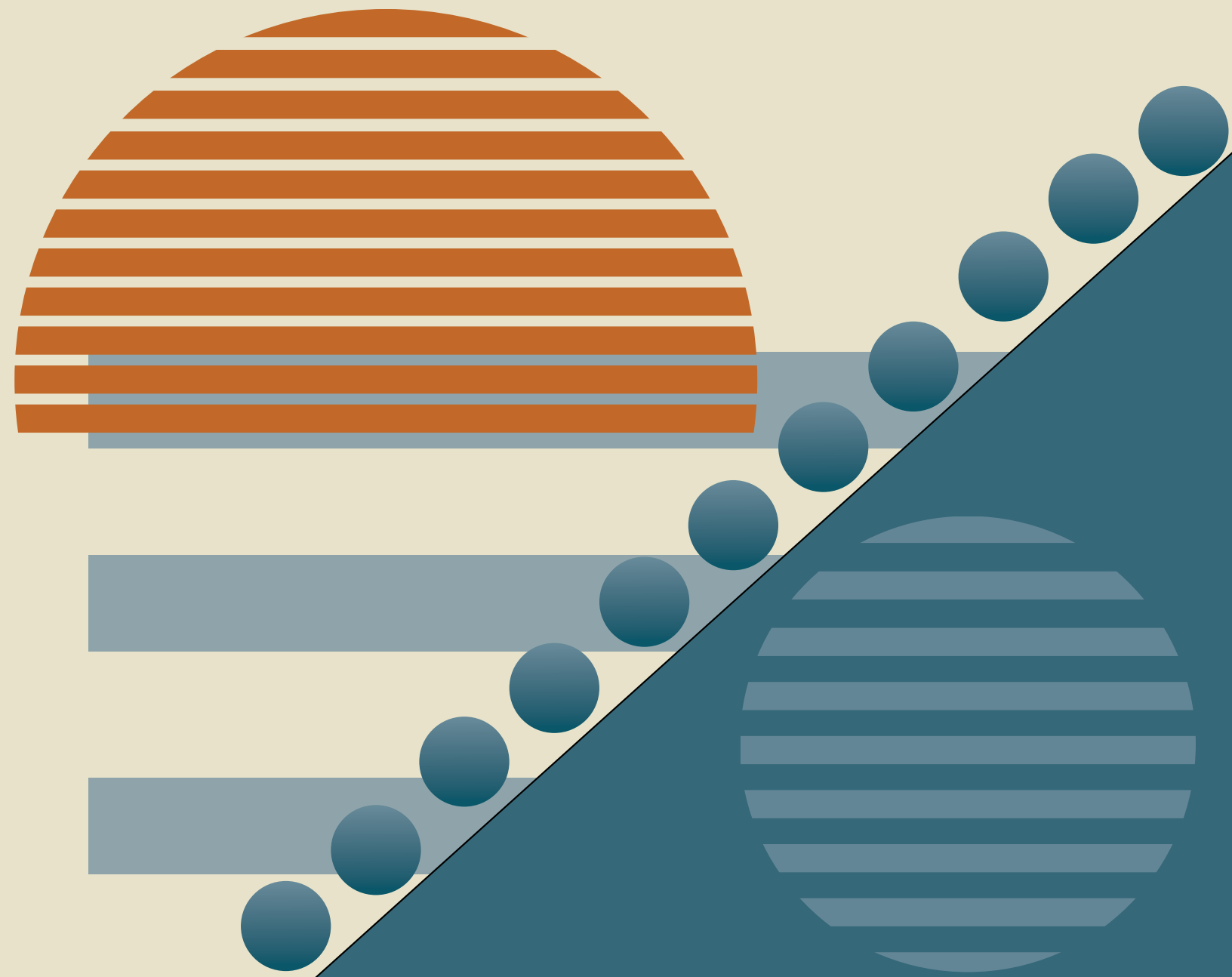
The practice of mentoring has a long history. It crosses cultures, countries, and socio-economic boundaries. It reflects the determination and commitment of one generation to foster the personal, vocational, and spiritual development of emerging generations. In Mosaic, we have found that young adults are concerned about the well-being of the next generation and are ready to assume responsibility as mentors. We encourage you to challenge and equip both youth and young adults in your church to become involved in mentoring others toward whole discipleship.

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- This revised and updated Handbook focuses on practical helps for mentoring youth and young adults in the North American context.
- While effort has been taken to curate the many resources available with respect to the values and purposes of the Mosaic community, inclusion of a resource is not to be viewed as an endorsement. Explore the resources for transferable ideas for your mentoring ministry with youth and young adults.
- Resources in this Handbook are certainly adaptable to other contexts. Select those sections that will serve mentoring relationships in your context and adapt the information as needed. (As of Spring 2026 all links are active.)
- The sections or chapters of this Handbook need not be read in order.
- Links in this manual cannot be accessed from a hard copy. Go to [Mentoring Matters](#) and download the PDF version.

Why a Mentoring Program?...
God calls us to do this!





Mentoring: Holistic Discipleship

Mentoring relationships are increasingly common in business, congregations, and other organizational contexts. In most cases, they benefit the participants and the organization. In faith communities, mentoring could be seen as discipleship, as a fulfillment of Paul's mandate to Timothy to equip those who will then be able to equip others also (2 Timothy 2:2). As such, mentoring should assume far greater importance in the church. Dallas Willard lamented that, "The leading assumption in the American church is that you can be a Christian but not a disciple." He insisted that, "What we want is not just evangelism that makes converts. We want disciples . . ." He defined a disciple as, "a person who has decided that the most important thing in their life is to learn how to do what Jesus said to do."¹

In congregations, we could describe mentoring relationships as disciples journeying together: "people who are constantly revising their affairs to carry through on their decision to follow Jesus".² As such, mentoring is more than a priority; it is the DNA of faith communities.³ With their commitments to investing in the personal and spiritual development of others, with a core of values based on Scripture, and with a large pool of dedicated volunteers, faith communities should be among the most effective at mentoring.

Richard Krejcir elaborates:

Why a Mentoring Program?

- God calls us to do this! Matthew 28:16-20, Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Galatians 6:1-10, Mark 1:35 - 2:12. These passages tell us discipleship and mentoring are not an option, but a command. We must follow out of obedience, and mentor in a multi-generational lifestyle, caring for the total person. It will move us from 'just' praying to praying with care.
- Maturity rose out of webs of relationships of older people interacting with and discipling the younger (John 1:36-52, Acts 10:10).
- Acts 11-15 tells us leadership is about discipleship as Barnabas was with Paul.

¹ See "Rethinking Evangelism." Access the article [here](#). [The article is worth reading in its entirety.]

² "Rethinking Evangelism"

³ Check out the services available through the Christian Association of Youth Mentoring (CAYM) whose vision is to restore mentoring as the DNA of the church. (Access at www.caym.org)

- The Gospels tell us the models Jesus used were mentoring and small groups.
- John 15 tells us discipling and mentoring are lifestyles of personal dedication by our obedience; we see people being taught and equipped to live for Christ physically, mentally, socially, and emotionally, as well as spiritually.⁴⁴

Many youth and young adults care about God and want to serve. However, it is a mistake to think that we are equipping them to someday take over when their elders have retired! The thing of it is this: youth and young adults who are passionate about serving Jesus, are not going to hang around the church and wait their turn!

Revisiting the Research

Just over a decade ago (2014-2015), a flurry of research focused on millennials and the importance of connecting them with mentors and empowering them for service, including mentoring others. The research population at that time were millennials (17-34 years). The Barna Group found that while millennials had concerns about the church's lack of tolerance and that it wasn't always the safest place to express doubt, a "plurality say they attend church to be closer to God (44%) and more than one-third say they go to learn more about God (37%). Getting outside the humdrum of their everyday lives to experience transcendence – in worship, in prayer, in teaching – is a key desire for many Millennials when it comes to church."⁵

A decade ago, the numerous report findings pertinent to mentoring came down to this: (1) the church today has a golden opportunity to equip millennials who, in turn, would equip others, and (2) the role of mentoring was to help them discover their mission in the world.

Obviously there will be some differences as youth and young adults make the passage from one era to the next. The next sections present highlights from a sampling of report findings from more recent studies.

Today's Youth and Young Adults: Religious Activities and Spirituality

For 25 years, the Barna Group has been studying the "state of the church." One report of significance for congregations was posted in September 2025: [New Barna Data: Young Adults Lead a Resurgence in Church Attendance](#). Among the findings are these:

- While church-going among older generations is declining, younger adults (Gen Z and Millennials)⁶ are now the most regular in church attendance. However, the caveat is that while they are demonstrating interest in spirituality and a desire for belonging, "they still attend less than half the time . . ."

⁴ Richard Krejcir. "How to Develop a Mentoring Program". Access the article here:

⁵ "Millennials at Church: What Millennials Want When They Visit Church." Summarized from a report of research, "Making Space for Millennials" (2014). The Barna Group and the Cornerstone Knowledge Network, 2015. Purchase the report [here](#). Access the Executive Summary of the Report [here](#).

⁶ Gen Z (13-27 years), Millennials (28-43 years).

- The Barna Group head of research also observed that even as young people are showing up more frequently it is the older adults who are most loyal – even as they attend roughly two out of every five weekends.
- “Weekly rhythms can no longer be assumed. Church leaders will need to reimagine discipleship pathways, relational connections and volunteer engagement in ways that resonate with a younger majority.”
- “Churches that offer relational connection, spiritual mentoring and authentic belonging can nurture this renewed interest into depth of faith.”
- “Discipleship strategies must account for a rhythm where people are present at church less than half the time. Digital tools can help bridge this gap. Church apps for texting and small groups, as well as online resources for spiritual growth can help augment the in-person Sunday experience.”

A term such as “resurgence” can be misleading especially when one reviews the actual statistics in the study. But, in general, the findings of the Barna Group suggest that younger adults remain interested in God and spirituality. In the Mosaic community we can with confidence affirm that youth and young adults are supportive and do seek relationships among the members of the congregations. However, they are significantly more present in “third space” venues for bible study, spiritual formation, and social connection.

Some findings of reliable research studies may prompt observation and improve mentoring practices. For example, the Pew Research Center has been reporting findings from its Religious Landscape Survey since 2007. Their February 2025 report⁷ suggests that the Christian (mostly Protestant - 40%) population in the US has been relatively stable (60 to 64%) between 2019 and 2024. The findings also show that “large majorities of Americans have a spiritual or supernatural outlook on the world.” For instance, 86% believe there is a soul or spirit, and 79% believe “there is something spiritual beyond the natural world”—with 70% believing that there is a heaven or hell or both. However, the study suggests that there may be declines in the “religious landscape” in the future. They point to what could be a contradiction (or perhaps a clarification) of the Barna Group study; namely, young adults (18-24 years) are less likely to identify as Christian, pray daily, or attend religious services, and more likely to be religiously unaffiliated.⁸

The Pew Research conclusion, at least in this section of the lengthy report is that,

Time will tell whether the recent stability in measures of religious commitment is the beginning of a lasting shift in America’s religious trajectory. But it is inevitable that older generations will decline in size as their members gradually die. We also know that the younger cohorts succeeding them are much less religious.

This means that, for lasting stability to take hold in the U.S. religious landscape, something would need to change. For example, today’s young adults would have to become more religious as they age, or new generations of adults who are more religious than their parents would have to emerge.⁹

⁷ [Decline of Christianity in the U.S. Has Slowed, May Have Leveled Off](#), Findings from the 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study (Pew Research Center) by Gregory A. Smith, Alan Cooperman, Becka A. Alper, Besheer Mohamed, Chip Rotolo, Patricia Tevington, Justin Nortey, Asta Kallo, Jeff Diamant, and Dalia Fahmy, February 26, 2025

⁸ Compare these findings, and the September 2025 Barna Group posting given in the text, with the April 2025 posting by the Barna Group, “New Research: Belief in Jesus Rises, Fueled by Younger Adults

⁹ Pew Research Center, February 2025

The final sample of studies of youth and young adult religious activities and spirituality given in this Handbook, is the Springtide Research Institute. They surveyed 4500 U.S. youth and young adults and reported their findings in [The State of Religion & Young People 2023: Exploring the Sacred](#) (\$21.95). One of their key findings is that “today’s youth are not closed off to the spiritual and can acknowledge and embrace the personal, relational, and mysterious side of spirituality.” Review a summary of their findings [here](#).

General Research Reports of Studies Related to Youth and Young Adults

In 2024, a Pew Research Center report presented findings from 1453 U.S. parents and teens who were asked, “Compared with 20 years ago, do you think being a teenager today is harder, easier or about the same?”¹⁰ In general, the findings suggest that parents and teens agree that it is harder being a teen today; but in different ratios (parents 69%), teens (44%). One of the more significant factors is technology (69% of parents attribute technology as a causal factor in making life harder, as opposed to 39% of teens). Yet, among parents and teens who say that life is easier today for teens, 59% of parents and 60% of teens mention technology as a factor. Teens are more likely than parents to identify pressure concerning how they look and expectations as negative factors (31% of teens compared with 16% of parents). Both parents and teens are agreed that the country or world is in worse shape today (15% each), and that violence and drugs are a significant issue (8%).

The Annie E. Casey Foundation commissioned a study of youth and young adults in the U.S. and posted the report in 2024.¹¹ The report notes that the population of youth and young adults has remained consistent over the past decade (about 50 million), with the majority of the group being young adults, 18-24 years (30.5 million). Their Data Center,¹² indicates among many findings that the young adult population is becoming more racially diverse; and while the poverty rate for young adults has dropped more significantly than for youth (about 19%), about 2 in 5 youth and young adults live in low-income families.

Other key findings cited in the document include: “financial security, housing affordability, mental health, substance abuse, death rates and access to health insurance, among others. Racial and ethnic inequities permeate virtually every issue facing youth and young adults. Socioeconomic status and where youth live also greatly impact their opportunities or barriers to success. At the same time, the country has made meaningful progress in other areas, such as improving high school graduation rates, increasing young adult civic engagement and reducing rates of poverty, teen births and juvenile detention. Additional strides have been made in supporting young people in the transition to adulthood, although much more work is needed in this area, particularly for youth aging out of foster care.”

The United Nations has long had an interest in the welfare and potential of the world’s youth – defining the age range of this population as 15-24 years. In their recent report, “Who are the Youth?” they observe that the world population of youth (ages 15-24 years) is 1.2 billion or 16% of the total

¹⁰ [Why Many Parents and Teens Think It’s Harder Being a Teen Today](#) by Michelle Faverio, Jeffrey Gottfried, Kaitlyn Radde, Chris Baronavski, and Sara Atske

¹¹ [A National Profile of Youth and Young Adults](#) Posted October 3, 2024 by the Annie E. Casey Foundation

¹² The Data Center can be accessed from within the document. It provides more than 60 indicators on the health and wellbeing of youth and young adults, “ranging from employment, poverty and education to health, mental health, and family and community issues.”

population. It is expected that this number will increase to 1.3 billion by 2030.

As youth are increasingly demanding more just, equitable and progressive opportunities and solutions in their societies, the need to address the multifaceted challenges faced by young people (such as access to education, health, employment and gender equality) have become more pressing than ever.

Youth can be a positive force for development when provided with the knowledge and opportunities they need to thrive. In particular, young people should acquire the education and skills needed to contribute in a productive economy; and they need access to a job market that can absorb them into the labour force.¹³

The report, “Youth: Investing in the Future” includes data from the United Nations report and summarizes other research (e.g., Annie E. Casey Foundation) related to youth vulnerability, education and workplace, and prevention. In their summary they report that,

The world today contains 1.8 billion youth between the ages of 10 and 24 – the most populous age group in the world. Youth in transition today shape urbanization trends, civil society, and needs of the aging across the spectrum. As tomorrow’s potential leaders, today’s youth are challenged by violence, climate change, shifting family structures, and intergenerational transmission of poverty, educational disadvantage, and gender discrimination. Highly vulnerable to the health threats of injury, substance abuse, sexual risk, and mental illness, their choices and the consequences of their behaviors not only shape individual trajectories but also influence the fate of entire societies and nations. While contemporary adolescents face challenges, they also demonstrate a technological sophistication in a digitally interconnected world—and greater access than their parents to new ideas, information, and innovation. With the right policies and investments, they can become the problem-solvers, entrepreneurs, and change agents of the coming decades.¹⁴

A report (2024) from the World Health Organization (WHO), drawing on findings from a 2022 survey of 280,000 youth (aged 11, 13, and 15 years) from 44 countries in Europe, Central Asia, and Canada focuses on the need for healthier social media habits among adolescents. The findings support those of the Pew Research Center in that they show “a sharp rise in problematic social media use among adolescents, with rates increasing from 7% in 2018 to 11% in 2022. This, coupled with findings that 12% of adolescents are at risk of problematic gaming, raises urgent concerns about the impact of digital technology on the mental health and wellbeing of young people.”¹⁵

The WHO report should be read alongside a similar report from the Mayo Clinic drawing on a 2022 survey of 1300, 13-17 year olds that found that 35% of these teens access at least one of five social media platforms several times in a day (i.e., YouTube, TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Snapchat). The survey cites both positive and negative findings in young people’s use of social media¹⁶.

Clearly, research into all aspects of youth and young adult life is abundant. As you review the findings for yourself, what key ideas, opportunities, and challenges do they present for mentoring youth and young adults in your congregation and community?

¹³ [Who are the Youth?](#) United Nations, Global Issues, Youth. Access within the document 15 youth priority areas and proposals by the World Programme of Action for Youth

¹⁴ [Youth: Investing in the Future](#) by The Global Health and Learning Incubator, Harvard University.

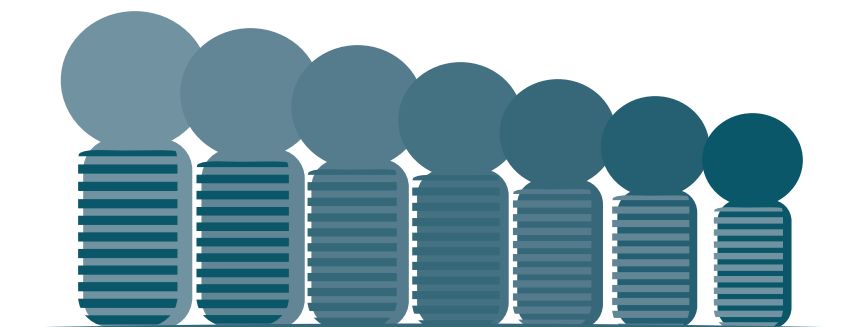
¹⁵ [Teens, Screens, and Mental Health](#). WHO, September 25, 2024.

¹⁶ [Teens and Social Media Use: What’s the Impact?](#) By the Mayo Clinic Staff.

Mentoring Youth and Young Adults

Is mentoring still a vital need for these generations? Of course!! But, before moving ahead with a mentoring strategy, consider where you will begin and whether or not mentoring will become a priority. Consider the extent to which you reflect authentic faith as a community, what you will have to modify or add (e.g., space, time, resources, committed prayer), and how you will identify, affirm, and make room for the unique gifts of youth and young adults. This Handbook was written to provide tips and resources for starting (or evaluating) your mentoring program. Each chapter features curated information for the Mosaic community of churches and nonprofit initiatives; but the information is adaptable to other contexts.

Congregations have had practice over centuries in leading women and men to examine their lives, confront the claims of Christ on their lives, and support them in their decisions. Often, the church fails at these tasks, but more often the people of God inject spiritual values and moral strength into this world.



Effective Mentor Leaders

To be effective mentor leaders, we must do what Jesus taught us to do: We must reach beyond the boundaries that separate us and connect with people who are different from us. – Tony Dungy

A mentor is not a parent, social worker, or counselor. A better description is that of trusted friend who becomes a sounding board, encourager, and guide. “The mentorship relationship is unique in that the mentor doesn’t just ‘give advice,’ but is also part of personal trusted relationship between two people where questions, advice, knowledge and discussion flow back and forth openly.”¹ The more effective mentors see the relationship as one of mutual learning and development.

Differences Between Coaching and Mentoring

For most, coaching is related to the development of specific skills or abilities. “Hard skills” are quantifiable and taught on the job or in training workshops and programs (e.g., computer programming, changing a head gasket, mixing paints for art projects). “Soft skills”, while still specific, are typically subjective, transferable, and learned over time (e.g., creative thinking, working in teams, decision-making). Coaching is typically employer or team leader initiated at the workplace where the coach provides the means to develop the employee’s skills for their current role.

Mentoring is holistic, relational, and focuses on personal, vocational, and spiritual development. Mentoring is offered through businesses, schools, churches, and community agencies. A mentoring relationship is typically initiated by mutual invitation, or it may be encouraged by an organization.²

Attitudes and Actions of Effective Mentors

Over many years, the Search Institute has provided research findings and resources for those who minister among youth. The [Developmental Relationships Framework](#) reflects their conviction that close connections help youth to build identity and purpose for their lives. The Framework identifies five elements, linked to twenty specific actions that foster powerful relationships with youth. The Framework may be downloaded in either Spanish or English for nonprofit and educational use.

¹ Amy Erret. “[Entrepreneurs Need More Than Guidance](#).” *The Wharton Magazine*. January 19, 2011

² For more detail on coaching practices and mentoring practices see [Coaching vs Mentoring: What’s the Difference?](#) by Amanda Schneiders. *Chronus*, May 2025

Dedicated to the Others' Development

An effective mentor is more than just someone with experience who wants to pass it along. A mentor is committed to the development of another without thought of reward. This sort of commitment takes time and energy, so, as well as being capable, the mentor must be available. Erret argues that mentors provide three great services: they open doors, they give an outside perspective and fresh eyes, and they hold one accountable. It follows then that an effective mentor has three main qualities: candor, competence, and experience.³

For the Christian community, an effective mentor seeks to partner with the Holy Spirit in the development of the other, who in turn will be able to develop others (2 Timothy 2:2). In a mentoring relationship shaped by this attitude, both parties are willing to reflect on their experiences and share what they have and are learning. This level of commitment takes time and patience, and the willingness to be involved the relationship for about a year (unless, after some weeks or months, the participants feel they aren't a good fit or feel it is simply time to end it).

A mentor who is committed to a person's development respects the other, allows them room to make personal choices, asks questions to prompt reflection about life choices when needed, guides the person to resources and to others who may provide richer experience and wisdom on an issue. Such a mentor resists the tendency to control the mentoring relationship and nurtures within the relationship the desire to seek after God and God's leading in their lives.

Mentor Retention

While mentor retention cannot be forced (remember, most if not all mentors will be volunteers), it can be encouraged. Retention is more likely if attention is given to the following:

- Effective training.
- Organizational support (e.g., budget, communication, resources, opportunity to share ideas).
- Fellowship gatherings.
- Encouragement and recognition that what they are doing is making a difference.
- Periodic review of the mentoring experience to determine if expectations are being met.
- Clear communication of mentoring goals and procedures.
- Realistic messages about mentoring and the young adults served.

It is important to provide adequate supports, such as those listed above. But more importantly, the mentor who lasts understands that, instead of . . .

Building a life of significance, and creating a legacy of real value, means . . . being willing to step out in your life and onto the platforms of influence you've been given and touch the lives of people in need. . . . [I]f you want to make a difference in the lives of the people you lead, you must be willing to walk alongside them, to lift and encourage them, to share moments of understanding with them, and to spend time with them. – Tony Dungy

³ Erret. ["Entrepreneurs Need More Than Guidance."](#)

Additional Resources

[What Are the Qualities of a Great Mentor?](#) by Brittany Yesudasan. CRU (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ)

[5 Qualities That Make a Great Mentor](#) by Diane Paddison. *Today's Christian Woman*, July 2015

[What to Look for in a Spiritual Mentor](#) by Melissa Kruger. *Crossway*, June 2020

[Nine Habits of Highly Successful Mentoring](#) Gangai Victor. *XPastor: Business Brain + Pastoral Heart* = XP, May 2014

[Mentoring vs Coaching: The Key Differences and Benefits](#), by Matt Munday. Think Learning, September 2023

[Coaching vs. Mentoring: What's the Difference?](#) By Zachary Amos. *Radical Candor*

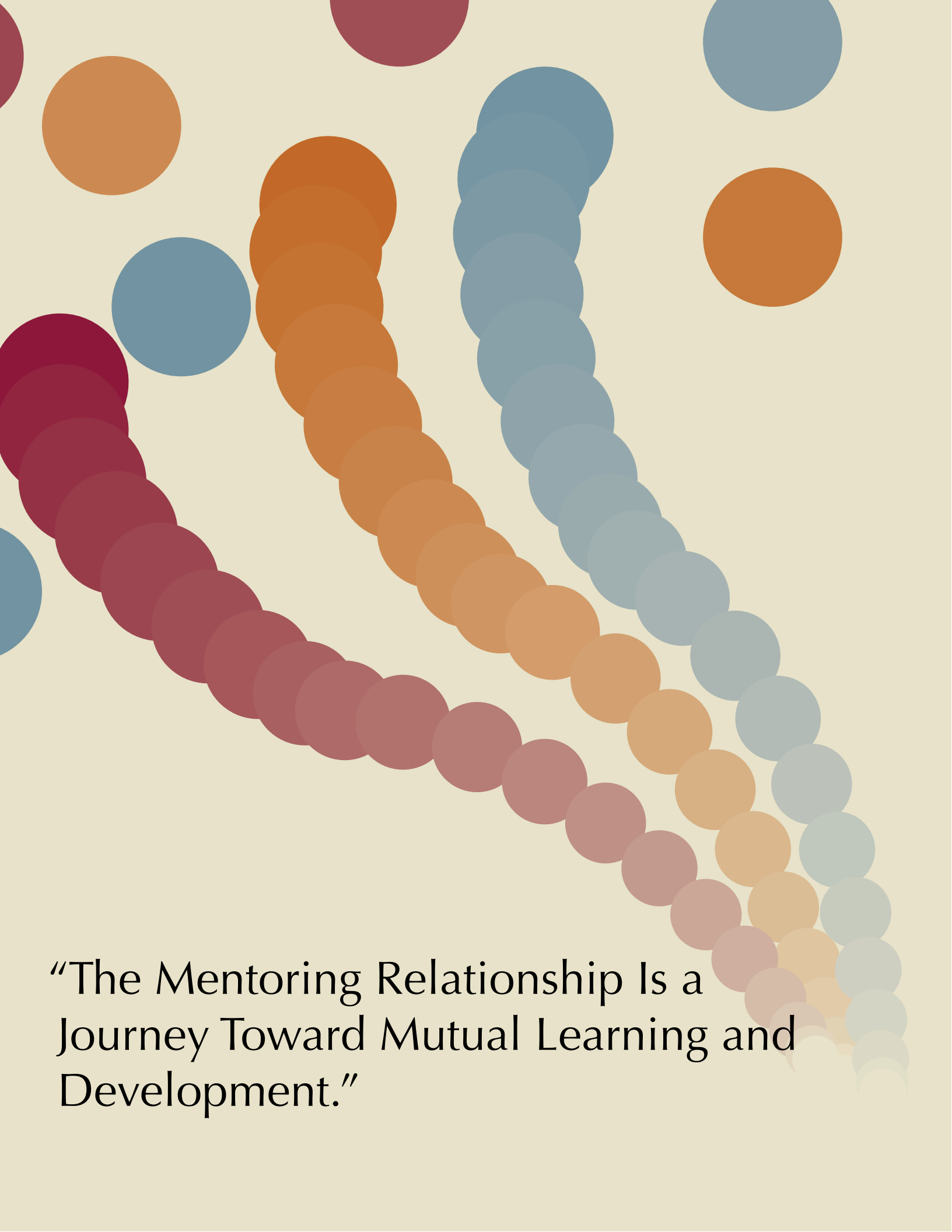
[Coaching vs. Mentoring: 11 Key Differences & Skills Needed](#) by Neelie Verlinden. *Academy to Innovate HR* (AIHR)

[The 12 pivotal qualities of the best mentors](#) by Ryan Carruthers. *Together*, January 2023

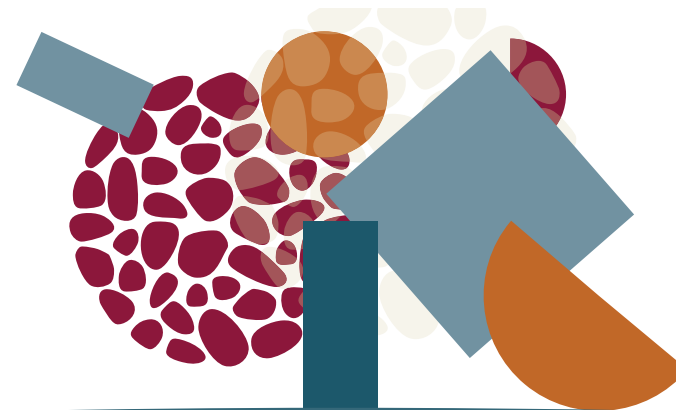
[15 Invaluable Traits That Make A Good Mentor Great](#) by Expert Panel, Forbes Council Members. *Forbes*, January 2024.

[Characteristics of Effective Mentors and Mentees](#) *Michigan State University*

[Comprehensive Approaches to Mentor Retention](#). More Than Saying Thank You. U.S. Department of Education, *Mentoring Resource Center*, March 2009



*"The Mentoring Relationship Is a
Journey Toward Mutual Learning and
Development."*



Training Matters

We seek to connect mentors and youth and young adults toward whole life discipleship. Clearly there are many relationships in Scripture where someone, a mentor, is teaching and modeling a lifestyle of discipleship and service. Jesus modeled the values of the kingdom of God. After a time he sent the disciples out to practice what they had been learning—a workshop, if you will. Paul said, “Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me . . .” (Philippians 4:9). His expectation was that those who are mentored, mentor others.

Effective mentors are passionate about service and coming alongside others to foster personal and spiritual growth. In addition, there are certain abilities and areas of knowledge that mentors need. Some of these are learned or enhanced through experience; others are learned from one or more mentors. Specific areas of knowledge and skill can be gained and practiced in workshops. This section provides some information on training, but most of it includes sample workshops that have been adapted from different training materials. These, in turn, may be further adapted to suit your particular context¹.

As you prepare a workshop event, find a space that is comfortable and will make group interaction possible. The room should be large enough to allow people to move around, and be clean and well lit. Avoid setting up the space like a lecture hall. Depending on the number of participants, set up tables (round tables preferred) or arrange the chairs to allow participants to see and speak easily to one another. If small group discussion or work is planned, use a space with separate rooms; or find a space large enough so that the groups can move around without distracting each other.

Why Training Matters

When a mentor comes alongside for a time to provide wisdom and lessons from experience, they ask questions rather than give advice, help a mentee to see alternate approaches, and resist trying to control the relationship. The mentor may share strategies used in the past to address issues as a means to stimulate reflection and conversation. Perhaps most importantly, the mentor is an encourager, one who supports, inspires and challenges.

¹ A number of downloadable resources developed by the National Mentoring Center project are designed to “help mentoring programs prepare both volunteer mentors and the youth they serve for their mentoring experience. These materials can be useful in both pre-match training and ongoing training that helps participants build mentoring skills over time.” [Access these resources here.](#)

The mentoring relationship is a journey toward mutual learning and development. As such, the mentor is a facilitator and youth and young adults assume responsibility to ask their own questions, take the initiative in conversation, and suggest activities they could do together. Their mutual efforts in nurturing the mentoring relationship will have a significant impact on all their lives.

Commonly described abilities of a mentor include active listening, ability to inspire trust, to guide in determining goals for the mentoring relationship, to foster personal and spiritual development, and to encourage. While many of these abilities come naturally to those who genuinely care for another's growth, to do them well often requires specific training.

Common Topics for Training

In the literature on mentor training are several areas of skill development. Occasionally, both mentors and young adults could participate in joint training sessions. Here is a representative list of topics:

- Establishing and maintaining boundaries
- Listening skills
- The art of the question
- Goal setting
- Maintaining confidentiality
- Understanding the role of a mentor
- Evaluating the mentoring relationship
- Selecting and using suitable activities in the mentoring relationship
- Responses in crisis situations, conflict resolution
- Communication
- Cultural competency and diversity
- At risk populations and community support

Ongoing Training Options for Mentors

Online training programs are available at relatively low cost. For example:

- *Mentoring Central* offers courses for individuals or groups. Descriptions of the courses and prices may be accessed [here](#). The training focuses on mentoring of youth (and is not oriented to the corporate sector); however, the principles can be adapted to young adult mentoring relationships. There is a downloadable overview for each course to help potential participants determine if the course would fit their circumstances.
- *Udemy* offers several online courses in various aspects of mentoring; not all of which are exclusively corporate training. Courses and pricing are described [here](#).
- [Mentoring University](#) offers courses and certification for those who manage mentoring programs. They also have programs on mentoring for non-profit organizations specifically. See their training options [here](#).

Six Sample Workshops to Adapt to Your Context

The following workshop outlines are adapted from Ongoing Training for Mentors.² They can be further adapted to fit your context.

² Amy Cannata (ed). Ongoing Training for Mentors: 12 Interactive Sessions. Mentoring Resource Center, 2006. Access eBook (among other resources) [here](#).

SAMPLE WORKSHOP #1

On Boundaries

Supplies: Whiteboard, newsprint, or flip chart paper, chart markers, copies of two Handouts (see below), 3” x 5” index cards, pens or pencils.

Set up round tables for four to five people each.

Overview: Learning to set boundaries allows youth and young adults to feel safe and develop a sense of trust. Ultimately, they need to learn how to set boundaries for themselves. This training workshop will help mentors identify which boundaries are essential, as well as provide guidelines for how to protect those boundaries throughout the life of the mentoring relationship.

Instructions:

1. Have the mentors introduce themselves and each *briefly* share a generalized example of a situation when a personal boundary was crossed; or when they set a strong boundary.
2. Copy and distribute Handout 1: “On Boundaries.” Give a different scenario to each group. Ask the participants to volunteer an example from their experience to illustrate one of the sections in the Handout. Invite questions and comment.
3. Copy and distribute Handout 2: “Improv Prompts for Boundary Issues” Adapt the prompts for your context; or create different prompts that better reflect your context. See the numerous examples of prompts given in this improv articles: [30 Powerful Improv Prompts for the Drama Classroom](#)
4. Some may be adapted to better fit your context. Allow time for each group (of 4-5 participants) to discuss and prepare an “improv” – a brief skit that illustrates both the issue and how they would manage it.
5. After all the groups have acted out their “improv” gather in large group. Ask: “What have we learned from the improvisations about what can happen if boundaries are not set, about what boundaries are appropriate, and how to discuss boundaries with the young adults?” Write the suggestions on the whiteboard or chart paper.
6. Invite the participants to add ideas or ask questions. Summarize key points.
7. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3” x 5” index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect the cards to help you assess the workshop):
 - What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

HANDOUT #1

On Boundaries

What is a boundary?

For boundaries to be effective they need to be applied on a consistent and ongoing basis. Healthy boundaries benefit our relationships. Boundaries need to work for each person in the mentoring relationship; and as such, setting boundaries provides opportunities for each participant to examine their own personal growth. Boundaries show that each person is respected and on the same page with regard to expectations.

How will I know a personal boundary has been crossed?

Feeling angry, used, or feeling that you need to walk away from the relationship, may indicate that your boundaries have been crossed.

How do I safeguard boundaries?

Decide what boundaries are important to you before the mentoring relationship begins. This planning will prevent being caught off guard and help you rehearse a response. Once you have some idea of boundaries that are important to you, be flexible. You might decide to adjust one or more boundaries as the mentoring relationship proceeds. Also, if you are not sure how to respond to a situation, ask for time to think about it. Examples of boundaries include:

- *Money:* How much money am I comfortable spending on each outing? How will I respond if the youth or young adult asks me for money or to buy them something?
- *Behavior:* How will I respond if the mentee habitually uses inappropriate language or is disrespectful of others?
- *Self-disclosure:* How will I deal with questions about my previous experiences (e.g., with drugs, personal relationships, alcohol)?
- *Time:* How much time will I spend in meetings? Will I take calls at work? How late is too late or too early to get a call at home?
- *Other?*

Suggested guidelines when confronted with situations that challenge healthy boundaries

When confronted with a potential boundary issue, ask one or more of the following questions:

- How can I respond in a way that protects the mentoring relationship?
- What are possible consequences of my responses to the situation?
- How can I communicate the importance of the boundary without blaming or shaming the mentee?

HANDOUT 2

Improv Prompts for Boundary Issues

Give different prompts to each group.

Improv Prompt #1. The youth or young adult is persistently late for meetings; or often fails to show up without contacting you. In this instance, they failed to show up at an arranged meeting with the director of a local youth organization with a view to possible short-term volunteer work that you both were interested in doing. What will you do or say when you next meet the youth or young adult?

Improv Prompt #2. You have been meeting in your mentoring relationship for about six months. You are able to share comfortably and are getting to know each other. On this day, you are asked if you had been involved in some personal, potentially sensitive matter when you were younger. How will you respond?

Improv Prompt #3. You notice that your mentee often refers to another group in an inappropriate way. To this point you haven't said anything, but now you feel you should. How will you initiate the conversation and what will you do if they dismiss or deny the behavior?

Improv Prompt #4. You seem to be getting along with your mentee. Recently, they have started to call you several times a day. You are willing to be available but are unsure if you should encourage the frequent calling. You don't want to discourage or drive away the youth or young adult, but you are increasingly uncomfortable getting a number of calls at work and at home. What should you do?

Improv Prompt #5. The mentee uses profane language that you feel is disrespectful and inappropriate. Even though you may have commented on it, the behavior persists. How will you respond?

Improv Prompt #6. The mentee seems to have developed inappropriate feelings for you and it is clear that they want the relationship to be more than that of mentor/mentee. What should you do?

SAMPLE WORKSHOP #2

On Effective Communication

Supplies: Whiteboard or chart paper, chart markers, 3” x 5” index cards, pens or pencils available, copies of two Handouts (see below)

Set up round tables, or place several semi-circles of chairs facing the “front” of the room.

Overview: Communication is always a challenge in any relationship. This workshop presents ways to promote effective communication during the various stages of a mentoring relationship. Participants will have experience with communication skills and have opportunity to raise current challenges.

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to introduce themselves and tell how long they have been in their current mentoring relationship.
2. Distribute Handout #1: “Typical Stages in a Mentoring Relationship” and index cards. Give examples from your own experience related to one or more stages. Then ask participants to give examples.
3. Activity: “Four Corners”. Create a large sign for each of the four stages of a mentoring relationship (see below). Post a sign in each corner (or area) of the room. Ask participants to cluster at a sign that best represents where they are in their mentoring relationship. If necessary, ask participants to move to another corner if that stage is underrepresented. (Stage 4 may not have been experienced by any in the group. If so, ask some participants to select that stage and imagine the sort of challenges and strategies that would be important.)
4. Ask participants to make a list on an index card of 4-6 challenges they confront in their mentoring relationship related to the stage where they are clustered. On another index card ask them to list strategies they have or could use to promote more effective communication. Be available to give assistance if needed. Before returning to their places, have groups synthesize their challenges and strategies and print them on the chart paper provided (use chart markers so that the print will not “bleed” through).
5. Each group posts their chart paper lists and participants return to their places. Ask each group to briefly present its challenges and strategies. Invite other groups to make comments or ask questions.
6. Distribute Handout #2: “Communication Tips”. Underscore three factors: (a) the need for mentors to recognize challenges and, where possible, work with the youth or young adult to deal with them; (b) the fact that good communication fosters trust; (c) that mentors should not see themselves as telling the mentee how to behave or think; and (d) that mentors need to communicate the boundaries that will work for each person in the mentoring relationship.
7. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3x5 index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect these to help you assess the workshop):
 - What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

Handout #1

Typical Stages of a Mentoring Relationship

<u>STAGE 1</u> Getting Started	Characteristics: • Getting to know each other, first impressions are forming • Clarify the purpose and goals of the mentoring relationship • Mentor takes the lead in listening. Possible questions: • “Any questions or insights from our last meeting?” • “What was there about that issue that interested/bothered you?” • “Tell me about . . .” • “What I understand you saying is . . . Right?”
<u>STAGE 2</u> Deepening Understanding	Characteristics: • May challenge one another’s perspectives or expectations • Finally feeling comfortable with each other, testing boundaries • Rethinking first impressions • Difficult feelings or emotions may be expressed • Determining priorities in the mentoring relationship • Identifying mutual areas of interest and personal and spiritual growth. Possible questions: • “What might be the consequences of . . .?” • “What resources or information do we need here.” • “How can I help?” • “What is the most important thing for us to learn from this?” • “What was the breakthrough you experienced?”
<u>STAGE 3</u> “Real” Mentoring	Characteristics: • The relationship begins to feel right, trust is deepening • Growth is observed in various areas for one or both partners • The personal connection is deepening • Options related to action on ideas and interests are explored • The mentoring relationship is reviewed. Possible questions: • “Now that you/we have decided to do . . . what do we need to do first?” • “What are the pros and cons of . . .” • “How can I help you with this?” • “What so far have been positive benefits of this relationship? Where could we improve?”
<u>STAGE 4</u> Ending	Characteristics: • Preparing for closure • The mentee may resist closure and start pulling away • Each needs to reflect on the benefits of the mentoring relationship, and areas of where each has grown personally and spiritually. Possible questions: • What have been significant learnings through this relationship? • How will you/could we apply what you have gained from this relationship? • Would you become a mentor to others? Why? Why not?

Handout #2

Communication Tips

<u>STAGE 1</u> Getting Started	Effective Communication: • Ask open-ended questions (avoid “yes” or “no” questions) • Be open in body language • Engage in active listening. Pay attention and ask questions to draw out the youth or young adult • Demonstrate empathy (show that you are “with” the mentee even if you aren’t there to “fix” their issue) • Avoid “prescriptive” communication—telling the youth or young adult what to do or think • Don’t be afraid of silence
<u>STAGE 2</u> Deepening Understanding	Effective Communication: • Be consistent in your communication • Be respectful of the youth or young adult • Demonstrate problem-solving techniques through open-ended questions • Raise sensitive issues in a context of acceptance • Separate behavior from who the mentee is • Disclose personal feelings and experiences when appropriate • Establish and honor boundaries on both sides
<u>STAGE 3</u> “Real” Mentoring	Effective Communication: • Continue with disclosures when appropriate • Avoid giving advice or trying to fix the mentee’s problem • Build on the youth or young adult’s strengths in the mentoring relationship • Give positive feedback and communicate when something has offended or hurt you. Use statements such as “When I hear . . . I feel . . .” or “When you said or did . . . I felt . . .”
<u>STAGE 4</u> Ending	Effective Communication: • Be sure that each of you really understands what the other has said about the mentoring relationship. • Provide feedback that describes growth you have observed

SAMPLE WORKSHOP #3

When the Mentee Experiences Crisis

Advance Prep: Read the section in this Mentoring Matters Handbook: “Crisis Intervention”. Have a list of community agencies or personnel available in your area where you can refer people in crisis. Collect samples of church policies and practices concerning confidentiality, mandated reporting, and mentor supervision. Consider inviting an experienced professional to respond to questions or to make a presentation.

Supplies: Whiteboard or chart paper, chart markers, 3” x 5” index cards, pens or pencils, copies of two Handouts (see below). An LCD projector is optional, but use it to display Handouts if desired.

Set up round tables, or place chairs in several semi-circles facing the “front” of the room

Overview: Many mentors worry that they won’t know what to do if a youth or young adult comes to them in crisis. This workshop will help mentors with resources and procedures to follow in such instances.

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to introduce themselves and share a positive story related to a mentoring relationship.
2. Ask participants to briefly describe, without identifying any involved, a crisis situation they experienced with one or more youth or young adults. Ask them to describe what help they were able to give, what frustrations they experienced, what they learned from the experience that they believe others should know.
3. What qualifies as a crisis? Write the following list on the whiteboard or chart paper and ask participants to add to the list or ask questions about particular items.
 - Loss of a family member or friend
 - Divorce
 - Loss of one’s home due to foreclosure or disaster
 - Domestic violence
 - Child abuse
 - Gun violence
 - Severe physical or mental illness
 - Suicide
 - Drug addiction and other drug related problems
 - Incarceration
4. Distribute Handout #1: “What Are Some Difficult Issues?” Discuss differences between an issue of concern and a crisis requiring intervention. Suggested responses might include that it depends on the severity of the situation; or on availability of resources to manage the situation; or on the consequences of the actions involved in the situation (e.g., someone in

fear of their life, or someone involved in criminal behavior).

5. Display or provide samples of referral resources and church policies concerning confidentiality and mandated reporting. Know the state's laws concerning what must be shared with a pastor (a mandated reporter), how to report suspected abuse, and what action(s) to take when someone is in crisis.
6. Invite participants to reflect on a personal experience of crisis. Ask them to recall what they did to help them cope with the situation. Attempt to create a list of ideas that are particularly helpful or even necessary during a crisis event. For example:
 - What, if anything, helped you to keep calm? If not, what stressful behaviors did you experience and what were their effects?
 - Who helped you in the situation? What did they do that was of most help?
 - What physical surroundings helped protect you?
 - What actions did you take or what decisions did you make that helped you to cope or overcome the crisis (e.g., counseling, music, medical or legal intervention).
7. Distribute Handout #2: "Seven Tips for Talking With a Mentee about a Crisis Situation" and discuss. Remind participants that a mentor who has been able to build trust in the mentoring relationship is more likely to be one that the youth or young adult confides in concerning a crisis. It is important that the mentor know some things that can be done in such a situation, without attempting to be a social worker, law enforcement officer, parent or guardian, or medical professional! The role of a mentor is to support and to guide the mentee to resources.
8. Taking care of oneself. Working with others in difficult or crisis situations takes a lot of emotional energy. Ask the mentors to discuss in small groups what they can do to support one another and sustain their own personal and spiritual health.
9. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3x5 index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect these to help you assess the workshop):
 - What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

Handout #1

What are some difficult issues?

For purposes of this workshop, topics discussed between a mentor and mentee are identified as delicate, of concern, and a crisis. In this workshop only the classifications of Issues of Concern and Crises are relevant.

Delicate topics may be sensitive or even embarrassing, but in a relationship of trust seldom worrying. Nevertheless, even if the mentor seeks advice on how to deal with the topic, confidentiality must be respected. Typically such topics will be discussed only if initiated by the youth or young adult.

Trust is built when confidentiality is respected. But as you are determining how you will relate to one another, tell the youth or young adult(s) that information they share with you will be kept in confidence; but that there are certain situations that you must report because of their potential to do harm (e.g., abuse, criminal activity, suicidal threats, threats of violence toward others). Talk about how such issues will be shared and with whom. You may elicit their ideas about what to do in such situations.

Issues of Concern may have significant consequences for the youth or young adult, but they are not necessarily serious enough to require intervention. Some reflect ongoing situations requiring support from the mentor—support without judgment. The mentor engages the mentee in conversation and asks open-ended questions to stimulate problem solving (e.g., What have you done so far about this? What do you think would help you get through this? What are the common factors that seem to come up time and time again?)

Crises will most likely require intervention of some kind. In such cases, the mentors should never attempt or be expected to deal with the crisis alone. Crises involving abuse or criminal action or threat must be reported to the appropriate authority. Others will require a referral to an agency or individual equipped to deal with the situation.

Handout #2

When Talking With a Mentee About a Crisis Situation

1. Sit at eye level with the mentee.
2. Do not act surprised or angry or be judgmental when the mentee describes the crisis. Convey that you know it is a serious situation and begin to discuss with the mentee how to deal with it, and what resources are available.
3. Don't ask for more than the youth or young adult is comfortable sharing. Use openended questions (questions that aren't simply "yes" or "no" questions) to help them describe the situation to the extent they desire. For example: What have you done to this point to deal with this? Who do you trust in this situation?
4. If appropriate, reflect back to the mentee what they seem to be feeling ("That seems frightening", "If I were in that situation I would be at a loss for what to do".)
5. Affirm the youth or young adult for being willing to take action in the situation.
6. Brainstorm options with the mentee and offer any resources that you know about and believe would be worth considering.
7. Be up front with the mentee if the situation requires you to report abuse or potential (or actual) criminal behavior or threat.

SAMPLE WORKSHOP #4

Identity and the Mentoring Relationship

Supplies: “How to Practice Respecting Differences” handout, “Circles of Myself” handout (enlarge as needed), pens or pencils, 3” x 5” index cards, whiteboard and chart markers or LCD projector.

Set up round tables, or place chairs in several semi-circles facing the “front” of the room

Overview: This workshop leads participants to think about identity and how it might influence their mentoring relationships.

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to introduce themselves and to give one fun fact that people might not know about them. Read the “We Aren’t All the Same” quote.
2. Distribute the “Circles of Myself” worksheet. Instruct participants to write their name in the center circle and then complete the other circles with some aspects of their identity they consider to be most important.
3. Form groups of 3-4 (depending on number of total participants) to allow participants to discuss why the aspects are significant. Invite them to share stories with one another about times when one or more experiences were positive or negative in their identity development. Finally, invite them to share stereotypes common to the aspects of identity they wrote in their circles; and to talk about why those stereotypes may be harmful.
4. Return to large group and ask for insights from the stories they heard in their small groups. (If they intend to share details of the story, tell the participants to ask permission before doing so.) What did they learn or what stirred an emotional response? Were any preconceptions challenged?
5. Again in small groups (with different participants from the first exercise), have the participants respond to the following questions. Print the questions on the whiteboard or display using an LCD projector.
 - In what ways might one’s sense of identity (whether that of the mentor or mentee) and the pervasive stereotypes affect the mentoring relationship?
 - In what ways could background similarities and differences enrich the mentoring relationship?
 - Would you do this workshop with the mentees you are mentoring? Why? Why not
6. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3x5 index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect these to help you assess the workshop):
 - What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

How to Practice Respecting Differences

From “Respecting Differences: The First Step to Radically Reducing Racial Bias”

Richard C. Harris, Ed.D.

Published Oct 16, 2024

[See Full Article Here](#)

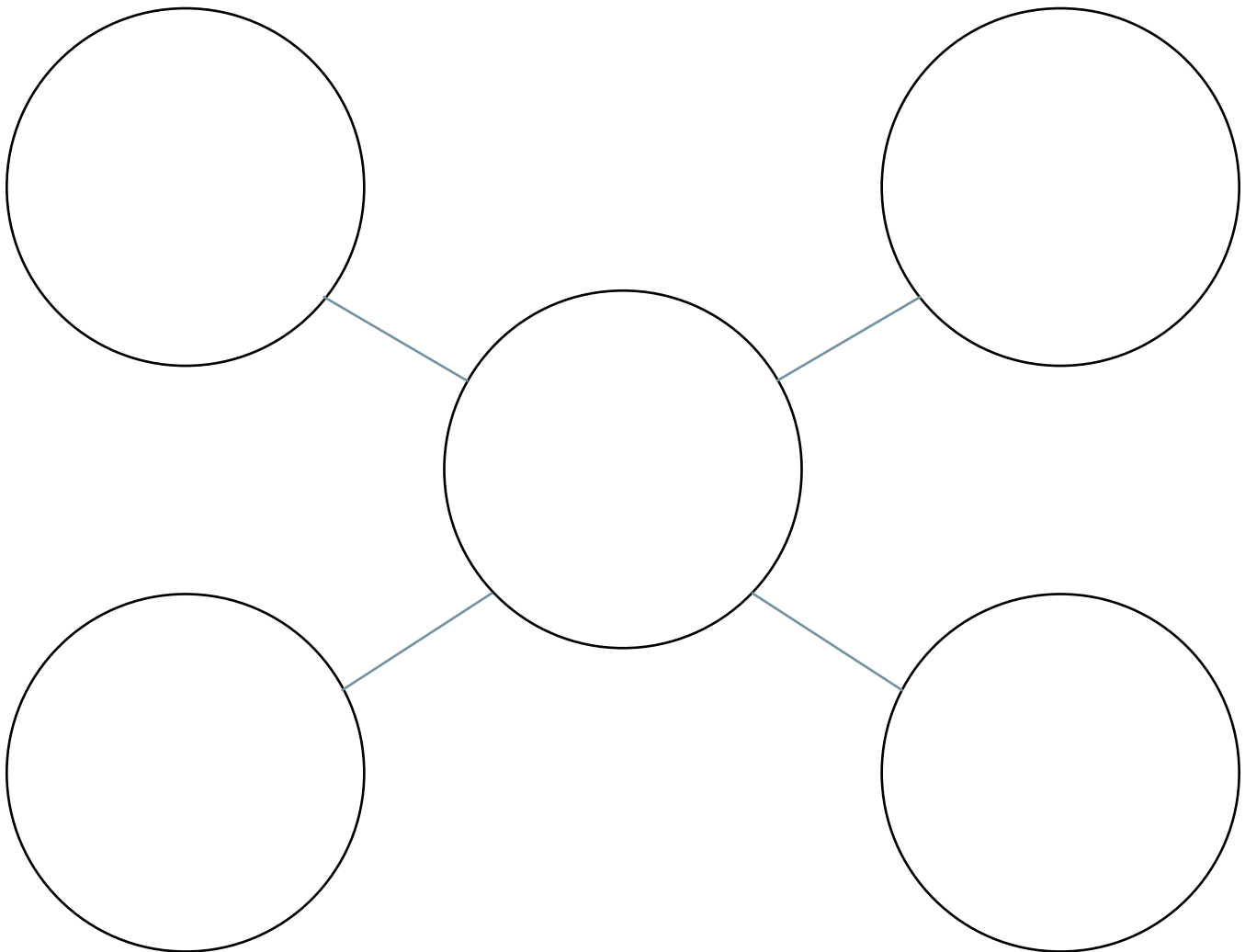
Respecting differences isn't something that happens automatically. It requires conscious effort and intentional practice. Here are a few ways you can start practicing respect for differences in your daily life and work:

1. **Challenge Your Assumptions . . .** Ask yourself, “What assumptions am I making about this person based on their race, ethnicity, or background?” Once you identify those assumptions, you can begin to question them and replace them with a more open-minded perspective.
2. **Listen More Than You Speak . . .** This means giving them the space to share their stories without interrupting or dismissing their perspectives. It also means avoiding the temptation to jump in with your own opinions or experiences as a way of minimizing theirs. . . .
3. **Acknowledge the Impact of History . . .** To truly respect someone's experience, you need to acknowledge the historical context in which their experiences are shaped. . . .
4. **Engage in Cross-Cultural Experiences . . .** One of the best ways to cultivate respect for differences is by engaging in cross-cultural experiences. . . . These experiences help us see the world through different lenses and foster greater understanding and appreciation for the diversity around us.
5. **Lead with Empathy . . .** Empathy allows us to see the world from someone else's perspective, which in turn helps us break down the walls of bias and prejudice.

Handout #2
Circles of Myself
Make a copy for each person

Circles of Myself

Place your name in the center circle of the structure below. Write an important aspect of your identity in each of the satellite circles- an identifier or descriptor that you feel is important to defining you. This can include: race, gender, family role, job or career role, religion, country or origin, etc.



SAMPLE WORKSHOP #5

Goal Setting

Supplies: whiteboard or chart paper, chart markers, two Handouts (see below), 3” x 5” index cards, pens or pencils

Set up round tables or place chairs in several semi-circles facing the “front” of the room.

Overview: Goal setting is an important part of the mentoring relationship. By gaining awareness of the importance of goal setting and incorporating this feature into the mentoring relationship, mentors can give youth or young adults more practice in meeting their potential. This session will explore strategies that mentors can use to help mentees use their strengths and values to achieve their dreams and hopes.

Instructions:

1. Ask participants to introduce themselves, tell how long they have been in their current mentoring relationship and, if possible, share a goal they have recently achieved.
2. Distribute a few index cards for each participant. Ask them to write their name on one side of a card. On the other side have them write 2-3 strengths they possess; qualities about themselves that they feel good about.
3. Using strengths to develop goals. Invite small groups of 4-5 participants per group to discuss why knowledge of personal strengths is important in goal setting. In what ways are our abilities (or spiritual gifts) a foundation for our personal and spiritual growth and why should we be intentional about developing those abilities? Could strengths become barriers to our personal and spiritual development? In what ways? What can get in the way of achieving your goals? What steps can we take to overcome potential barriers?
4. Invite participants to work individually or with a partner to complete Handout #1: “Goal-Setting Worksheet.”
5. After returning to large group, ask volunteers to share what they found useful about the activity, what not so helpful, or what they might modify.
6. Distribute Handout #2: “Adapting the Model for Mentees” and discuss its feasibility as a process to use with youth or young adults. Modify as desired.
7. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3x5 index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect these to help you assess the workshop):
 - What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

Handout #1

Goal Setting Worksheet

Step 1. Name 3-4 personal strengths or personal resources that will help you in setting goals for your life and work or ministry.

Strength 1:

Strength 2:

Strength 3:

Strength 4:

Step 2. How do you see yourself in 10 or more years? What do you want to be doing in the long term? (use one or two index cards)

Step 3. Name 3 short-term goals related to your long-term vision for your life and ministry or work. .

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

Step 4. Think of 2-3 activities that will help you achieve your short-term goals. Try to set approximate date/time goals for when these activities will be completed or the goal achieved.

Activity 1:	Date
Activity 2:	Date
Activity 3:	Date

Step 5. What might hinder you from engaging in your activities and/or achieving your goals?
What can you do about this?

Barrier 1:	Action:
Barrier 2:	Action:
Barrier 3:	Action:

Step 6. What did you learn? What might you change about how you think about your own personal and spiritual development?

Reflection:

Handout #2

Adapting the Model for Youth or Young Adults

Obviously, youth or young adults can work through Handout #1 in much the same way you did; and some may already have done similar exercises. Handout #2 presents a slightly different process that you might use with your mentee(s).

Step 1. Have a conversation with the youth or young adult about those qualities that they feel are strengths. Add your own description of special qualities you see in them.

Step 2. Invite the youth or young adult to create a “life map” of where they see themselves in a decade or two. What does the map look like in relation to family, vocation, personal character and spiritual growth, and so on? How will they get there? Perhaps ask the youth or young adult to write a “time traveler” letter from their own perspective a decade or two in the future.

Step 3. Work with the youth or young adult to name 2-3 short-term goals that will help them complete that personal “life map”.

Step 4. Discuss specific activities that will help the youth or young adult achieve their short-term goals; and try to make some decisions about when to start the activity and to have some idea of an end point. Ask how you might help.

Step 5. Identify potential hindrances to achieving short-term goals. What strategies could the youth or young adult use to deal with potential challenges on their “life map”.

SAMPLE WORKSHOP #6

Ending the Mentoring Relationship

Advance Preparation: Read the final paragraphs in the section “Developing the Mentoring Relationship” and Part 7 in “Best Practices for Mentoring Programs” in this Handbook.

Supplies: Whiteboard or chart paper, chart markers, 3” x 5” index cards, copies of “Sample Handouts to Use During Closure”, pens or pencils.

Set up round tables, or place chairs in several semi-circles facing the “front” of the room.

Overview: This workshop focuses on processes related to the ending of a mentoring relationship, and the importance of engaging in mutual reflection about the benefits and what they learned, or may learn, from their time as mentors.

Instructions:

1. Welcome participants and ask them to introduce themselves. Invite participants to share experiences about the ending of a relationship. Explore how their stories might be similar to or different from the ending of a mentoring relationship.
2. Distribute the following questions to small groups of 3-5 participants (or display them using the LCD projector). Ask groups to discuss the questions to determine possible responses and activities that would be important at the end of a mentoring relationship.
 - (a) Imagine a mentoring relationship that has been generally positive and ended well. What could you envision happening as that relationship is coming to an end? What questions could you raise that would help you and the youth or young adult assess the benefits, what you have learned together, and what you might do differently next time?
 - (b) (Staying in small groups.) Now imagine a more difficult mentoring relationship coming to an end. What factors might have contributed to the need to end the mentoring relationship? Imagine what might be learned from such a relationship. What could have been done in the early stages of the relationship to reduce the likelihood of such factors developing?
3. Have participants form new small groups, with different people from the previous small group. Distribute or display the following questions, bringing insights from their previous small group conversations into the discussion.

What indicates when it is the right time to bring a mentoring relationship to closure, whether or not the relationship has been generally positive or difficult? When might it be necessary for someone to intervene to bring the mentoring relationship to an end? What goals would you have for a meaningful closure of a mentoring relationship?
4. If your church has developed a mentoring program, review the procedures and guidelines for ending a mentoring relationship. Such a review might include,

- What to do if the mentor or young adult decides to leave the mentoring relationship earlier than expected.
 - What to do when the mentoring relationship is ending as planned.
 - If necessary, suggest guidelines for continued contact between mentor and young adult after the mentoring relationship has ended.
 - Future options for mentoring.
5. Distribute the Handout: “Sample Handouts to Use During Closure” and suggest that both the mentor and the mentee review them near the beginning of their mentoring relationship as they discuss guidelines and activities for eventual closure. They may modify the forms to suit the goals and emerging development of their particular mentoring relationship. (At the time of closure, the mentor and youth or young adult may want to discuss the similarities and differences in their responses on the forms.)
6. Closing. Ask participants to share one insight they gained during the workshop that they found particularly valuable. Give out 3x5 index cards and ask participants to write a response to the following questions (collect these to help you assess the workshop):
- What was most helpful to you in this workshop?
 - What would you recommend we do differently in the workshop?

Sample Handouts to Use During Closure

Sample Evaluation Form to be Completed by The Youth or Young Adult

Name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your participation. Your feedback will help us learn more about how to maintain quality mentoring relationships.

1. Approximately how often did you and your mentor met?

2. How would you describe your experience in the mentoring relationship?

3. What was most helpful to you in the mentoring relationship?

4. How would you improve future mentoring relationships?

5. What did your mentor bring to the relationship that you valued?

6. What would you now look for in a mentor?

7. Would you consider becoming a mentor? Why? Why not?

Sample Handouts to Use During Closure

Sample Evaluation Form to be Completed by mentor

Name: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for your participation. Your feedback will help us learn more about how to maintain quality mentoring relationships.

1. Approximately how often did you and the youth or young adult meet?

2. How would you describe your overall experience in the mentoring relationship?

3. What was most helpful to you in the mentoring relationship?

4. How would you improve future mentoring relationships?

5. What did the mentee bring to the relationship that you valued?

6. What would you now look for in a mentoring relationship with youth or young adults?

7. Would you consider taking on another mentoring relationship? Why? Why not?

Reflecting on what we learned

Use the following sentence prompts to aid your reflection on what you learned through the mentoring relationship. Add more prompts as desired.

1. I realized through the conversations and activities of this mentoring relationship that I . . .
2. I feel that my abilities and strengths were . . .
3. I now want to learn . . .
4. I intend to apply what I gained from this relationship in . . .

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to Training programs for mentors and mentees. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[The Mentoring and Nurturing Ministry Training Manual](#). *Christian Life Skills*. “The training includes good listening skills and sensitivity to the varying capacities of youth to engage conversations regarding the challenging issues of life, with all its dimensions, in the world where they live.” Additional resources featured at site.

[What Christian Mentoring Is and How to Do It](#) by Chelsea Kight. CRU (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ)

[Flourish: A Mentoring Journey](#). Oriented to mentor training for women.

[Mentor Training](#) by John Mallison. Australian Church Resources.

[Taking Clergy Mentoring to the Next Level: Group Training Version](#). Lewis Center for Church Leadership. “Clergy mentors indicate overwhelmingly that they need more training for their task. Mentees value mentoring but also indicate that their mentors need more resourcing for this important responsibility. *Taking Clergy Mentoring to the Next Level* is designed for group mentor training events conducted by denominations or judicatories. Available now on download for \$150.”

[Mentor Training: Equip Mentors with the Skills They Need](#) by Jennifer Sokolowsky. *Chronus* August 2025

[Comprehensive Mentor Training Guide: Boost Mentor Readiness](#) by Jenn Labin, mentorcliQ, October 2025

[Free courses, Free Mentor Training to Get You Started](#)

Sift through the [18 free courses](#) offered by the Alison organization for the 2-3 that may be of interest. They are clearly presented so a quick scan will do it.

Sign up at the [Collaborative Mentoring Webinar Series](#) to be informed of upcoming webinars on mentorship.

[Mentor Training](#) (7:50 minutes). An brief overview that includes “a definition of a mentor, mentor, program manager/admin, and mentee goals and expectations, relationship development and maintenance tips, challenges with mentoring and how to overcome them, characteristics to develop that can help in a mentoring relationship, and safety and ethical concerns with mentoring.”

[Free Online Training](#). Partnership for Student Success. “These modules are designed to support college students serving as mentors for K-12 students . . .”

Access information about the mentoring programs of the National Career Development Association (NCDA) [here](#).



Mentoring Diverse Communities

Four populations of youth and young adults are represented in this section. While there are certain factors about mentoring that are common to those from diverse backgrounds, each group has unique challenges and opportunities. Therefore, this section is mostly a presentation of resources that seem pertinent to these populations.

General Observations

- The sources demonstrate urgency about mentoring men—especially in Latino and African American populations.
- Most of the sources related to Asian men and women are concerned with how mentors provide support while adjusting to a new culture, and how mentors help Asian populations build professional networks.
- Mentoring resources for Native American populations focus primarily on educational initiatives and secondarily on professional advancement. Associations and networks that provide mentoring opportunities seem to be increasing.
- In all populations, associations and networks exist to help women find a way in the corporate world, politics, and other areas where women have been underrepresented if not discriminated against.
- Vivian Giang writes, “Most people will tell you that you should have various mentors to fill different roles in your professional and personal life. But if you are a minority woman, you need at least one minority woman mentoring you. . . . Here’s why: A lot of people simply don’t feel comfortable giving feedback to others who aren’t like them because they don’t know what to expect. For example, if there is an issue with your ‘executive presence,’ it may be difficult for your white male mentor to tell you that if you’re a black woman . . . Of course, it’s harder for minority women to find other minority women as mentors because there aren’t enough of them in leadership positions.”¹

¹ Vivian Giang, [Why It’s So Difficult For Minority Women To Find Mentors](#). *Fast Company*, January 2015.

- Mentoring is described as a proven way to increase such diversity in leadership. However, Ave Rio writes “Many leaders feel that ‘mentoring relationships just don’t last when they are seemingly forced via a formal matchmaking process . . .’ In addition, in the best mentoring relationships the goal is not sponsorship or help in climbing the corporate ladder. While such sponsorship may occur, mentees most often are looking for experienced men or women who will share advice and wisdom in how to be a leader.”²
- Not surprisingly, a healthy ethnic identity is found to contribute to,
 - . . . positive academic, psychological, and social outcomes . . . this finding suggests that a critical emphasis for the mentoring of minority youth is to encourage or celebrate the development of a healthy ethnic identity. In fact, a stronger ethnic identity is found more often among minority youth when they can identify a person in their life that is a role model . . . [T]he mentoring model is not usually a one-on-one mentoring strategy; the focus is more deliberately on pointing the youth toward a more positive and productive future rather than simply on being a ‘buddy’; and there is more attention to the training and preparation of mentors so that they are more culturally competent.³

General Resources and Descriptions of Mentoring Initiatives Within Racially Diverse Backgrounds

[4 Ways to be an Effective Mentor](#) by Dirrick Butler, Thrive Global, 2017

Supporting YouthBuild Students in Mentoring Relationships: Resources for Mentors. Access this Handbook [here](#).

Representative Mentoring Initiatives Within African American Communities

[Man Up](#) – an organization that “focuses on building strong leadership among Black men, offering personal growth, mentorship, and skill-building opportunities to empower them to lead and drive change.” See also [The Man Up Club](#) – offers mentoring programs to empower “young black males to make positive life choices while preparing them for post-high school education via college or trade school.”

[Uplift Mentor Program](#) for men of color who are currently licensed practicing teachers to serve as mentors for our year 1 and 2 teacher fellows.

[A Guide to Recruiting Black Men as Mentors for Black Boys](#) (2014).

[100 Black Men of America](#). “Committing ourselves to personify the type of people our children will look up to and emulate, we embrace the immense responsibility we have to our mentees and our communities.”

[Mentoring Across the Lines: Embracing racial and ethnic diversity](#), by Natasha Sistrunk Robinson. Access additional resources at her website [here](#).

² See [Mentoring Matters, Especially for Women and Minorities](#).

³ G. Roger Jarjoura. In “Effective Strategies for Mentoring African American Boys”. American Institutes for Research, 2013, p. 4. Numerous examples of “promising programs” and mentoring principles are given in the document. Access the paper [here](#).

[Black Career Women's Network](#) (BCWN)

[Radical Care, Real Consequences: Why Mentorship Still Matters](#) (2025). The William T. Grant Foundation. Funding the next generation of researchers. Access the article [here](#).

Representative Mentoring Initiatives Within Asian American Communities

“Asian American Youth Leadership Empowerment and Development” ([AALEAD](#)) Mentoring program for youth (8-18 years)

“Asian American Professional Association” ([AAPA](#)) Provides professionals with one-on-one mentoring, training, and networking opportunities.

“Mentoring Asian American Professionals” ([MAAP](#)). “The program pairs young professionals and college students with experienced mentors and provides the foundation for an effective and valuable mentoring relationship . . .”

“Pan-Pacific American Leaders and Mentors” ([APALM](#)). An “all-volunteer organization comprised of military and civilian professionals committed to mentoring and promoting professional development, retention and the advancement of Asian American and Pacific Islander leaders . . .”

“Asian Americans Hope to Build a Movement of Mentorship in Churches and Society”. A 2014 Asian American Ministry Conference (AAMC) [report](#).

“Asian American and Pacific Islander” ([AAPI](#)) mentoring programs supported by [Mentor](#).

[Fuller Asian American Center](#) hosts a number of initiatives for Asian American leaders.

[Asian American Mentor Program](#) (AAMP). A student run organization. “Mentors work with mentees to explore and learn how to express their identities within historical, social, and personal contexts.”

Representative Mentoring Initiatives Within Latino/a Communities

PBS Newshour, [Rethinking College](#). 2016 Report of a mentoring program that aims to keep Latino males in school (6:52 minutes)

[Mentoring Hispanic Students: A Literature Review](#) (2017) Download full text PDF.

[Latino/as' Perception of Peer: Mentors as Social Capital](#). *The Chronicle of Evidence Based Mentoring*, July 9, 2019. [Summarized by Ariel Ervin from R.V. Moschetti, S. Plunkett, R. Efrat, and D. Yomtov, 2018. “Peer Mentoring as Social Capital for Latina/o College Students at a Hispanic-serving Institution.” *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, 17 (4), 375–392.]

[Delivering Culturally Competent Mentoring Services to Low-Income Latino Youth](#), by Nicole Taylor. Padrinos Barrio Mentoring Project, Tucson, Arizona, Mentoring Resource Center, 2008

Representative Mentoring Initiatives Within Native American Communities

[What factors can sustain indigenous youth mentoring programs?](#) By Ariel Ervin, The Chronical of Evidence Based Mentoring, 2025 This article summarizes a 2023 research [report](#). The research “explores the barriers and facilitators of Indigenous youth mentoring programs to improve mental health outcomes and provides evidence for governments’ response to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

[Mentoring for American Indian and Alaska Native Youth 2019](#). Review of research organized around four questions: “(1) What is the effectiveness of mentoring for American Indian and Alaska Native youth? (2) What factors influence the effectiveness of mentoring for American Indian and Alaska Native youth? (3) What pathways are most important in linking mentoring to outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native youth? (4) To what extent have mentoring initiatives for American Indian and Alaska Native youth reached and engaged the youth, been implemented with high quality, and been adopted and sustained?”

[Assessing the Impact of an Indigenous Mentoring Program on Faculty to Support American Indian/Alaska Native Graduate Students in STEM](#), by Blakely Brown, Sweeney Windchief, Barbara Komlos, and Raquel Arouca, Magna Publications, 2020. This paper describes nine modules in the Indigenous Mentoring Program.

[Indigenous Knowledge Realized: Understanding the Role of Service Learning at the Intersection of Being a Mentor and a College-Going American Indian](#) by Chris Nelson, Academia, 2025. “The article explores the experiences of 13 undergraduate American Indian college students who served as mentors through a service-learning course while attending a 4year, predominantly White institution (PWI).”

[Delivering Quality Mentoring Services in Rural and Tribal Settings: A Case Study of the North Dakota Tribal Rural Mentoring Partnership](#) by Michael Garringer.

[Strengthening Native Community Commitment Through Mentoring Guidebook](#) by Susan Weinberger. Mentoring from an indigenous point of view.

[The Center Native American Youth](#), The Aspen Institute. The Center (CNAY) “provides Native youth with knowledge, skills and abilities to grow as change agents for a more just and equitable society.”

[Cook Native American Ministries Foundation](#) “provides grants to small and emerging community-based organizations, churches, tribal communities, and Native urban centers across the country.”

[Covenant Youth of Alaska Mentoring Initiative](#) [Native American]

Empowering Women from Racially Diverse Backgrounds

[Optimizing Mentoring Programs for Women of Color](#). Catalyst. Features an assessment tool for organizations seeking to improve their mentoring initiatives for women of color. Read the paper or sign up to download the ePaper.

[RISE: A National Mentorship Network](#) for Women from Racially Diverse Backgrounds in Ministry “connects women of color seminary students and early to mid-career clergy to experienced women ministers, senior pastors, faculty, and community leaders.”

[The We and the Us](#)—Mentoring African American Women in Higher Education Administration (2005) “This study investigates the importance of mentoring in African American women’s selection of higher education as a career choice and in their development as professionals in that career.”

Mentoring Matters, Especially for Women and Minorities, by Ave Rio. *Chief Learning Officer*, February 8, 2018. Access this article and other resources [here](#).

Empowering Boys and Young Men from Racially Diverse Backgrounds

Guide to Mentoring Boys and Young Men of Color. My Brother’s Keeper Alliance and MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2016. Sign in to download the free eBook [here](#).

[Mentoring May Help Young Men of Color Achieve Academic Success](#) by Devlin Hanson. *Urban Institute*, August 2016.

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to Mentoring Diverse Communities. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[The Value of Mentorship: Creating Opportunities for People of Color](#) by Waajida L. Small. *Idealist*, February 2021

[Mentorship in the Black Community: What Companies Need to Know](#) by Nicole Briggs. *Medium*. February 2021.

[Diversity Mentoring: What It Is & Its Importance for Your Organization](#) by Omer Usanaz. *Qooper*, September 7, 2023

[How Diversity Mentoring Programs Help Organizations](#) by Sherry Tiao. *Chronus*, August 2024

[Top 7 Mentoring Platforms for Diversity and Inclusion](#) by Sam Cook. *MentorcliQ*, October 2025



*“..at the end of the day,
an effective mentoring relationship
should make one’s personal and spiritual life richer....”*



So . . .

You Want to Find a Mentor

Only the most unaware feel they can get through life without a wise counselor or worthy example. Stories of mentor-like relationships abound in Scripture and throughout the long history of the church. The history of humanity demonstrates time and time again the value of wise relationships. One could have several mentors in a lifetime, each making a different contribution, and each walking alongside for part of the way.

Mentoring relationships take several forms: long term, short term, formal, informal, or peer. Hundreds of ideas are accessible for mentoring activities. But at the end of the day, an effective mentoring relationship should make one's personal and spiritual life richer and vocational goals more realistic if not achievable. One's values, beliefs, and commitments, and the capacity to make a difference, likely will be strengthened. Since the mentoring relationship should result in mutual benefit, even after the relationship has ended, both will have gained a friend, possibly for life.

Finding a Mentor

Finding a mentor requires some effort. Assess your life right now. What are your strengths and limitations? Where do you need a heavy dose of maturity personally and spiritually? Are you ready to admit that you can't go it alone? If so, begin your search by thinking of the sort of person who exemplifies the values, beliefs, and acts that make a positive difference. Ask someone who knows you well to suggest a person who might be willing to talk with you about a possible mentoring relationship. It is possible that a mentor could be someone you never met, but is someone you could work alongside and observe in action; perhaps meeting occasionally for short periods to discuss a strategy or the reasons for a particular action.

Be clear about what you bring to the mentoring relationship. It may be just a lot of questions at first; but ultimately you need to show that you are willing to take on new tasks, explore new territory, learn new and sometimes difficult things about yourself, and assume responsibility. You will enhance the mentoring relationship and your own development to the degree that you participate with your mentor in setting the purpose and goals for the relationship, are willing to ask for help and feedback, are open to new ideas, and assume responsibility for helping to make your meetings worthwhile.

In time, you will look for ways to enrich the life of your mentor (any effective mentor will seek out what they can learn from you). The mentoring relationship, to be useful, must be a two way street and both must seek to strengthen it. In your lifetime you may have several mentors, and become a mentor to others. By demonstrating that you know how to make a mentoring relationship work, you will attract prospective mentors and become someone others seek out for guidance.

A number of men and women in your church or other organization may have volunteered to serve as mentors. While most feel honored to be asked to serve as a mentor, don't assume that a person will say, "yes" to your invitation just because you ask. If the person says "no" thank them for their consideration. If appropriate, ask if they would be interested in keeping in touch with a view to reconsidering sometime in the future; or, if they could recommend someone from their own network who might be a good mentor. You might also consider who in your networks could recommend a potential mentor.

Some mentors may look for certain characteristics in a person, and may have specific goals that will shape the mentoring relationship. On your part, before you invite someone to be your mentor, think carefully about the characteristics you desire in a mentor. What would make a person a good fit for you? Ask yourself,

- At this point in my life/career what qualities do I need in a mentor?
- What do I expect my mentor to contribute to my personal, spiritual and vocational development?
- What will I bring to the mentoring relationship?
- What connections could I make that will help me find a potential mentor?

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF A MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

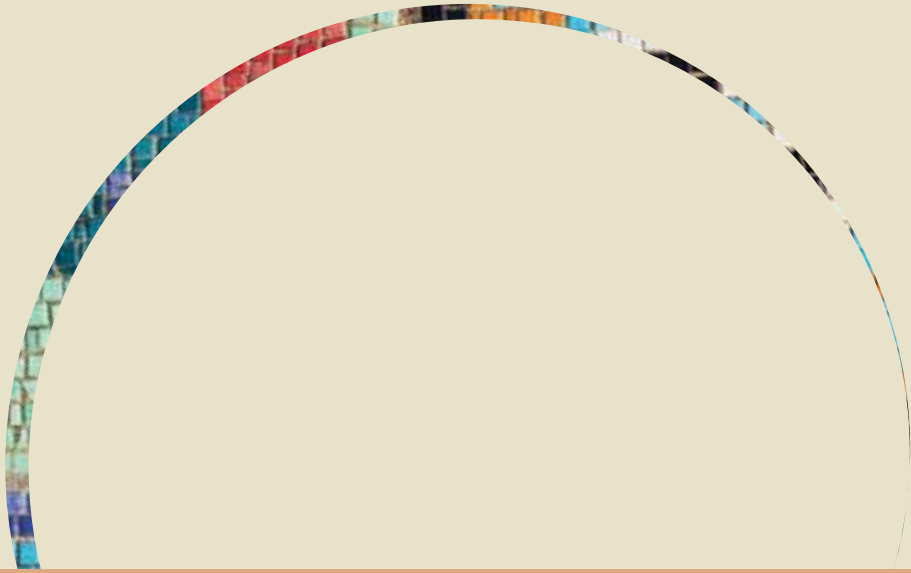
Meeting with a mentor is a relational and social experience; but it's not just that. You are, by mutual agreement, learning from each other. Before you meet, prepare questions pertinent to your interests, your work, your faith or whatever else is important to you. Think about how you might request feedback from your mentor. Make your questions and requests concrete. For example, a question such as "Do you believe that God is with us?" is too unfocused. Ask something like "What experiences have you had in your lifetime that assure that God is personal?" Similarly a question such as, "How did you choose your vocation?" is too broad. It would be more helpful to ask, "What steps did you take to determine a suitable vocation?" Or, "What contributed to your decision-making about whether or not to take a particular degree program?" The more specific your questions, or requests, the more helpful will be the mentor's responses. Be prepared and follow-through. These are two sure ways to a mentor's heart!

As you proceed, decide together how you will coordinate and plan your next meetings (e.g., text, phone, email, virtual), and who will take most responsibility for arranging the time and place of meetings. It would be helpful to make a list in advance of various places, and types of places where you could meet. As you decide these matters discuss the best ways for you to communicate with each other. Also, respond to your mentor's emails or texts or voice messages promptly.

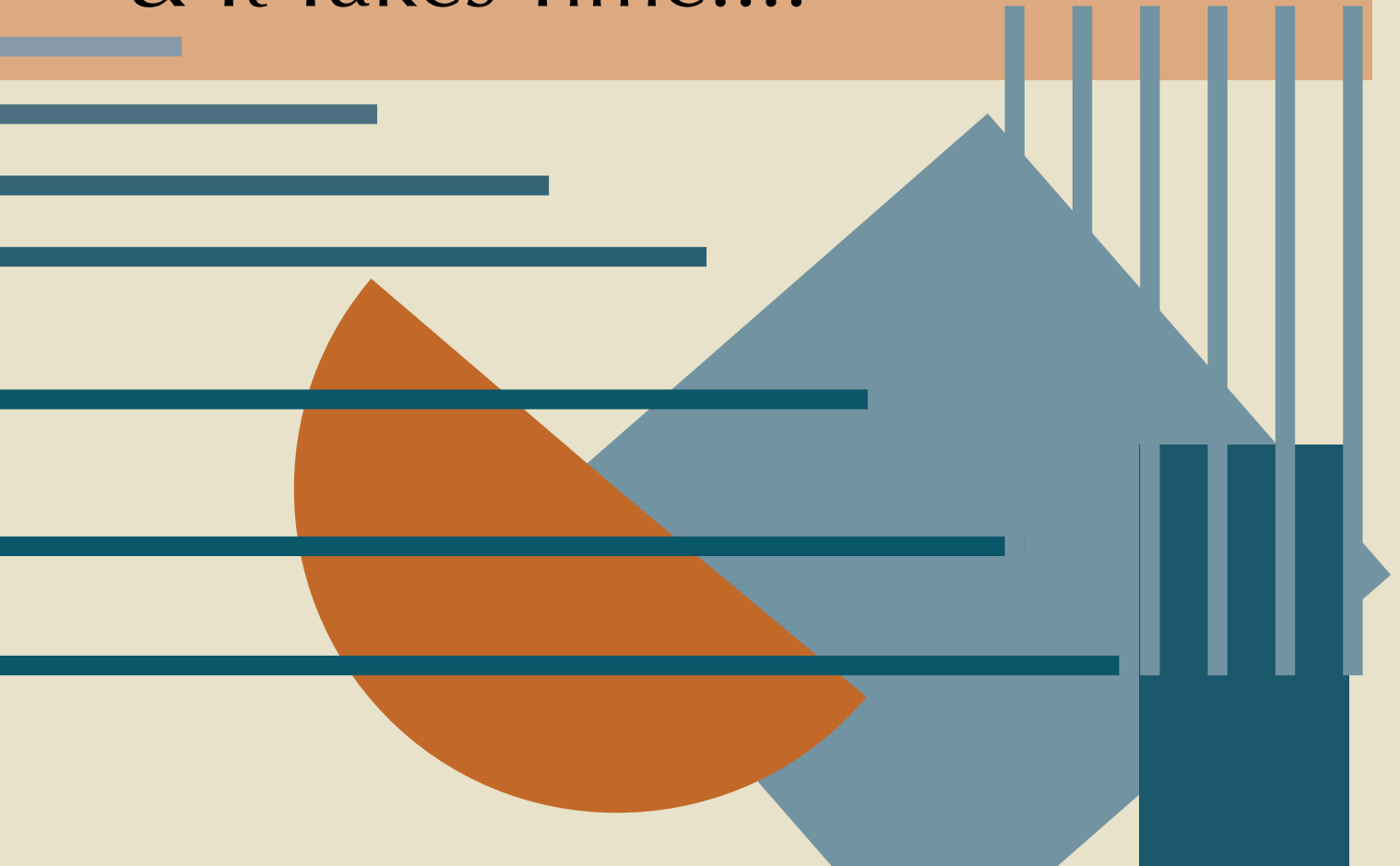
It is important to discern the limits of your mentoring relationship. For example, a mentor may not feel comfortable responding to your personal problems or sensitive issues in your life. Another mentor may prefer to invest in you personally but is not comfortable helping you work through school or career matters. From the start, be clear about the purpose and goals of the particular mentoring relationship. Knowing these, as well as your mutual preferences for the relationship, will open the way for your mentor to connect you to other networks of support and encouragement.

Finally, pay attention to how your mentor does things and interacts with people. Observe how they manage confrontation, makes decisions, addresses issues of justice and so on. You may never talk about such things with one another but you can learn a great deal about important values, goal setting, respect of others, and how to deal with personal crises just through observation.

What I've found about it is that there are some folks you can talk to until you're blue in the face—they're never going to get it and they're never going to change. But every once in a while, you'll run into someone who is eager to listen, eager to learn, and willing to try new things. Those are the people we need to reach. We have a responsibility as parents, older people, teachers, people in the neighborhood to recognize that. — Tyler Perry



*“A Mentoring Relationship
Is A Mutual Effort
& It Takes Time....”*



Developing the Mentoring Relationship



A lot of people have gone further than they thought they could because someone else thought they could.
—Anonymous

Basic Qualities of the Mentor

A mentor's capabilities will develop through the experiences of the mentoring relationship; however, certain basic qualities are vital:

- The mentor, while not a parent, is a teacher and guide. Mentors enter the relationship with a commitment to the other's development.
- The mentor is willing to share experiences at the right time and in an appropriate manner.
- A mentor asks open-ended questions (not simply 'yes' or 'no' questions) and is willing to listen to responses without the sort of judgment that stifles interaction.
- The mentor provides feedback in appropriate ways, at the request of the youth or young adult or when the situation is serious enough to require it.

Basic Qualities of the Mentee

A mentoring relationship built on mutual trust opens doors to possibilities in development. Fortunately, most youth and young adults want the input of someone they consider more experienced, wiser in certain areas, personable, and available. Once committed to the mentoring relationship, their capacities will develop; however, certain basic qualities of the mentee are vital:

- Wants to increase abilities, refine attitudes, develop personally and professionally, and grow spiritually.
- Assumes shared responsibility for goal setting, determining the purpose of meetings, and planning for mentoring activities.
- Contributes to a relationship that is mutually responsible and accountable.
- Understands and accepts that cultivating a mentoring relationship takes time and is willing to partner in making it effective.

- Communicates with the mentor promptly and is clear about what they desire from the mentoring relationship.
- Able to be vulnerable, willing to explore alternatives, and is receptive to new learning.
- Accepts constructive feedback, and acts upon it.
- Demonstrates productive growth.

The Mentoring Relationship

A mentoring relationship is a mutual effort, and it takes time. In its simplest terms, mentors invest time in relationship building, are trustworthy, and do what is needed to maintain that trust.¹

The quality of the relationship will be enhanced as both parties commit at the beginning to a few basic decisions: how often to meet (weekly, once a month, over lunch, more or less regularly), for how long (15 minutes, an hour, half a day) and where, how to communicate (each committing to reasonably prompt response times), what to share and what to keep in confidence, boundaries, who gives feedback and when, mutual accountability, the purpose of the relationship, and other matters that each considers important at the start of the relationship.²

You will have your own style as you begin connecting with your mentee: engage in small talk for a while, ask for an update on what's happened since your last meeting, and so on. As your conversations proceed, and when it seems appropriate, you might share your own story indicating the changes, successes and failures along the way. You might describe significant learning experiences and important markers along your spiritual journey.³

Invite the mentee to share learning experiences and important events with you. Talk about the questions you each have had about spirituality, faith, and so on. Establish goals together in a variety of areas: spirituality, fitness, learning, behavior, attitudes. The role of the mentor is not to parent or “fix” the youth or young adult. In mentoring, the skills of a spiritual director are more appropriate: listen, ask questions to stimulate reflection, help develop solutions, come alongside in times of difficulty, model how you confront issues in your own life, mutually seek God. You might also encourage the development of a small team of peers to whom the mentee will be accountable.⁴

You will find the right openings to encourage the youth or young adult to take responsibility for their own development, personally, spiritually and vocationally. Ask questions that encourage responsibility and initiative. For example,

- How would you assess the pros and cons in that situation?
- What steps will you take to achieve your goals in that area?
- If you are being blocked in that situation, what alternative strategies could you use?

¹ See also [“Creating a Mentoring Program”](#)

² For ideas to strengthen early stages of a mentoring relationship see [“Overcoming Relationship Pitfalls”](#)

³ For more helpful ideas go to “Strategies for Strengthening Mentoring Partnerships” pp. 51-52 in Linda Phillips-Jones. [The Mentor’s Guide: How to be the Kind of Mentor You Once Had—Or Wish You’d Had](#). The Coalition of Counseling Centers, The Mentoring Group, 2003.

⁴ See [“Four Phases of Mentorship.”](#) Guidelines and interactive questions are given that can be adapted to your situation. See also [“A 3-Stage Model of the Mentoring Process”](#) for a description of 3 stages and numerous other mentoring resources.

- What solutions do you see for that problem or issue?
- What additional information do you need and how will you get it?
- What would be the most useful resources for you in this situation? How can I help?
- What skills do you want to develop this year? Where do you intend to use these skills?
- What would like to learn more about this year?
- Who could help you with that? How could I help?

Don't just stop with the question. Listen carefully to responses to discern additional questions to ask. The best teachers, and mentors, ask more questions and give fewer answers! For example:

- How would you describe your own relationship with God?
- How is your sense of a personal mission for your life being clarified? Would you describe this as a "calling" to be about God's business in the world?
- What do you dream could be your future ministry? Or, an area where you feel you could make a difference?
- In what ways have your skills been tested? What skills do you feel you need to develop in order to be someone who makes a difference?
- In what ways is your character being tested and developed?
- How can I help you?
- What evidence do you have of God's presence in your life?
- As you assess your personal and spiritual growth, what areas do you want to work on?
- What are some things we could do that would help you become the person you want to be in life and service?
- In what ways do past experiences, good or not so good, help prepare you for the ministry you envision for your life?
- In some of those times when things didn't work out as planned, what did you learn?⁵

Invite the mentee to share personal dreams about where and how they would like to make a difference. As trust is developing, ask them to talk about their cultural and family background. Meanwhile, read up on the history of the particular race or ethnicity as it applies to the youth or young adult. However, learning about another culture is not the same as being part of that culture. A culture is formed through values, norms, rituals, family traditions, communication styles, mannerisms, ways of dressing, response to authority, to name a few. Trying to overidentify with someone from another background or culture generally comes across as false or even condescending. Ask questions that help you learn from the other. Begin statements with "I have a sense that . . ." rather than with "I know . . ." In short, diversity is needed to help us become better humans, but only as we learn to connect and relate across differences.

⁵ Adapted from Erik Johnson. "How to be an Effective Mentor." *Leadership Journal*. Spring 2000 Issue <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/content/how-to-be-an-effective-mentor/>

Have a meal or coffee together and talk about anything of interest. Share your respective expertise, backgrounds, personal values, expectations, and begin to identify specific and mutual goals. Talk about the mentee's desired goals.⁶ If you think they need to reflect on one or more life goals, ask open-ended questions rather than give advice. Offer some practical helps toward achieving the goals. Suggest that perhaps you could work on a particular skill together; even taking a workshop or a short-term course together. Each may suggest learning experiences that may become part of the mentoring relationship. These experiences are based typically on interest and goals for personal and spiritual development.⁷

Make a list of activities of mutual interest and benefit, and that contribute to the purpose and goals of the mentoring relationship. Engaging in activities together provides opportunities for trust building, and fosters a sense of mutual comfort with each other. (See “Mentoring Activities” in this Handbook.)

Always remember that mentoring is a shared job. You aren't solely responsible for creating a successful mentoring relationship. The person being mentored needs to be flexible, honest, open and receptive to feedback and insight. He or she needs to be willing and able to take action in pursuit of goals, to invest in learning and to take steps toward needed change. The mentee also needs to be willing to give you feedback and talk about what is or isn't working well in the relationship.

As you work together, you'll make course corrections, the relationship will deepen, and you'll discover that being a mentor is no longer an unnecessary, expendable task. Instead it will be a rewarding one for you that has a profound impact on others.⁸

When it is Time to End the Mentoring Partnership

Most mentoring relationships have a beginning and an agreed upon end. There may be other reasons for a mentoring relationship to end but, more often, the participants agree on an end point at the beginning (typically a year more or less) with periodic pauses for evaluation along the way. As the time gets closer, reflect back on what you have learned and talk about what the future might hold for each of you. Think together about what you might still want to do before the partnership ends. The following incomplete sentences could be used to stimulate your reflection:

- Through this mentoring relationship I have come to recognize strengths such as . . .
- I have learned that . . .
- I realize that there is more to learn about . . .
- I intend to apply what I have learned from this mentoring relationship by . . .

It might be helpful to write a journal entry or a letter about what has been gained through your time together. Or, even though the friendship can continue indefinitely, you might discuss whether or not you want certain aspects of the mentoring relationship to continue for an agreed upon time period. Discuss possibilities for a new mentor if appropriate; or perhaps invite the young adult to consider

⁶ See Michael Garringer and Linda Jucovy. *Building Relationships: A Guide for New Mentors*. Hamilton Fish Institute and National Mentoring Center, 2007 for a list of “20 Ways to Say You're Great”, p. 16. Download the free eBook [here](#).

⁷ See also, [10 Ideas for Building Meaningful Mentoring Relationships](#). Search Institute, January 20, 2016

⁸ E. Wayne Hart. [Seven Ways To Be An Effective Mentor](#). *ForbesOnline*. June 30, 2010.

becoming a mentor. Finally, as a way to celebrate what God has done through your time together, join other mentoring partnerships for a closing event.⁹

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to developing the mentoring relationship. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[A Beginner's Guide to Christian Mentoring](#) by Sam Larrabee. *Life Church*: Finds

[How Can Churches Create Space for Organic Mentoring Relationships?](#) By Sandra Graham and Sarah Rooker. *Lifeway Research*, January 2023

[Mentoring Future Leaders in the Church: Benefits, Challenges, and Candidates](#) by Chad Broderick. *Chad Broderick Blogging*, August 2024

[How Churches Can Encourage Organic Mentoring Relationships](#) by Sandra Peoples, 2025. On mentoring women.

[Bridging Generations: The Essential Role of Mentorship in the Church](#) by Jacki C. King. Church Answers. May 2024. On mentoring women

[3 Elements Needed for an Effective Mentoring Relationship](#) by Dave Keehn. *Biola University*, March 16, 2011

[5 Stages of the Mentoring Process: A Functional Approach](#) by David Peterka. MentorcliQ, November 2025

[Tips for Building a Mentoring Relationship](#). DOD Mentoring Resource Portal, 2021

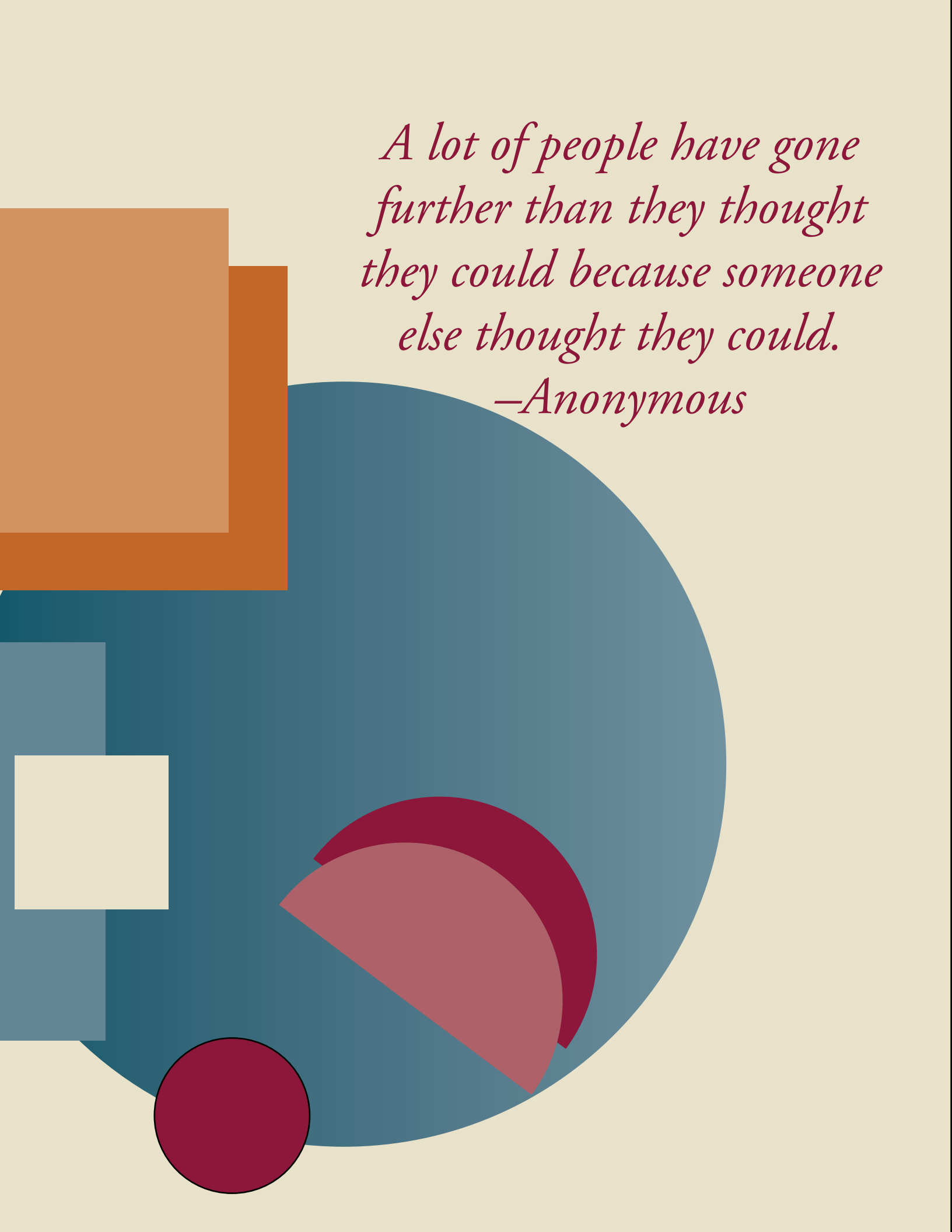
[Ten Tips for a Successful Mentor/Mentee Relationship](#). *Alliance for Academic Internal Medicine*.

[Key Features of an Effective Mentoring Relationship](#). *George Washington University, Department of Medicine and Health Sciences*.

[Becoming a Better Mentor: Strategies to be There for Young People](#) by Thomas Keller. Chapter 7, Working with Others in the Mentoring Relationship System. *Mentor*, 2022

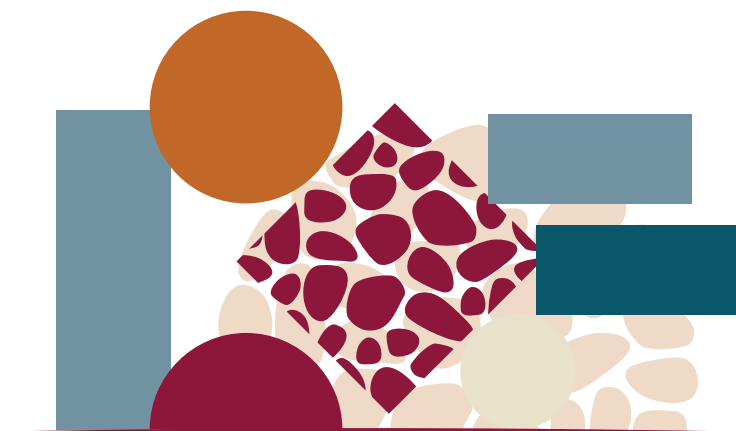
[Developing a Mentoring Relationship](#). Suzanne Glazer. *Harvard Business School*.

⁹ For more help on ending the mentoring relationship in a positive way see [Preparing for Close](#), pp. 59-62 in Linda Phillips-Jones. *The Mentor's Guide: How to be the Kind of Mentor You Once Had: Or Wish You'd Had*. The Coalition of Counseling Centers, The Mentoring Group, 2003.



*A lot of people have gone
further than they thought
they could because someone
else thought they could.*

—Anonymous



Mentoring Activities

Here are a number of mentoring activities and behaviors related to relationship building, personal and spiritual development, community service, vocation building, and professional and skill development. Select those that suit your personalities, culture, context, and the purposes you envision for the mentoring relationship. Activities you do together can stimulate meaningful conversation and help you get to know one another better.

Relationship Building Activities and Behaviors

- Return phone calls and e-mails within 48 hours whenever possible. If you are delayed email or text a message such as, “I got your message, will get back to you soon.”
- Show interest in what the youth or young adult is saying and reflect back important aspects of what they have said to show that you understood.
- Make eye contact and other body language signals that show you are paying attention to what the youth or young adult is saying.
- Give them one-on-one sincere, specific praise.
- Avoid discussing your own experiences until after the mentee has explained their issue, question, or concern. Rather than giving advice ask questions that lead them to reflect on their response.
- Ask the mentee’s advice about a project or problem you’re working on.
- Send the youth or young adult a card or note on their birthday or other milestone. Perhaps include a suitable Scripture verse, or a quote from someone, or share a book you value.
- Create an inclusive environment that says in essence, “I believe in you.”
- Ask questions about the mentee’s views, activities, and backgrounds, and listen with respect.
- Occasionally, call unexpectedly just to check in.
- Link up with other mentors and their mentees for lunch or other activity.
- Plan a meal and make it together or with a group.

- Serve meals to the homeless.
- Go out for lunch or supper together or with a group.
- Attend a concert, sports event, or movie together.
- Discuss a movie or video.
- Mow a senior's or shut-in's lawn.
- Design and build something together.
- Keep a journal of your times together complete with pictures.
- Plan and implement a fitness strategy together.
- Participate in a 5K run or walk together.
- Refuse all calls and other interruptions during mentoring sessions.
- On rare occasions, if asked, intervene as an advocate for the mentee during difficult times with people and/or situations.
- Check with the youth or young adult occasionally on the quality of your mentoring relationship. Ask what has been helpful and how things could be improved.
- *If appropriate and mutually agreeable*, ask to meet key members of the mentee's family to gain a deeper appreciation of their history and context.
- *If appropriate and mutually agreeable*, introduce the mentee to your family.
- Travel somewhere reasonably local and affordable; perhaps somewhere you have never been.

Personal and Spiritual Development Activities

- Photograph people and places that have special meaning.
- Picture what you imagine would be a perfect week: Where are you living? What are you doing? What do you look like? What have you surrounded yourself with? Who are you with?
- Participate in a time of prayer and fasting together.
- Imagine it is 20 years from now and you are with your or someone's else's grandchild. You are at a party. Who are the guests? Where is it? How are they describing their life/time with you?
- Share your respective journeys of faith without judgment.
- Select a book or section of the Bible to read together and discuss insights.
- Pray together.
- Study the Bible together.
- Discuss undergraduate or graduate school options and *if appropriate and desired*, visit one or more campuses with the mentee. Talk to faculty and students—especially students from racially diverse backgrounds about their perceptions of the school. Learn more about the local nonprofit, [Waukegan to College](#) and the ways they mentor young adult men and

women toward educational opportunities.¹

- Discuss course work and/or projects with the mentee.
- Share your personal vision or those of other leaders. Encourage the youth or young adult to develop a spiritual vision or mission statement.
- Describe experiences, mistakes, and progress you or others have encountered on your spiritual journey.
- Talk about people and events that have inspired and motivated you.
- Introduce your mentee to your colleagues who could be useful contacts or inspiring models.
- If an opportunity comes up to travel to another country and finances are accessible, take it. Discuss whatever ground rules deemed necessary before the trip.
- Discuss personal finances, how to use credit wisely, how to plan for retirement, how to explore where money is being invested and how that might impact their decisions about investing. Introduce the youth or young adult to a competent banker and/or investment counselor.
- If inclined and able, play basketball or other sport with the youth or young adult.
- Find a faith-based service project of mutual interest and spend a determined amount of time working on that project.
- Mutually develop a personal “mission statement” reflective of your skills, interests, passions, and personalities.
- Discuss a news event in your community, the state, the nation, and/or the world and share your mutual perspectives.
- Discuss how polarizing events and perspectives can be discussed civilly.
- Write down a list of 5-10 things you’ve always wanted to know. Talk about why you want to know these things, research, and share your findings.

Community Service Activities

- Plant a community garden, remove graffiti, collect food and deliver it to families in need or to the homeless.
- Plant and maintain a community garden with local residents.
- Work together in the [Mosaic Gardens](#).
- Do “friendly visiting” with residents in nursing homes. (Most residential facilities will require “friendly visitors” to complete a brief workshop or “briefing session”. Do it together.)
- Do chores for people with limited mobility.
- Bring a pet for pet therapy in nursing homes or children’s hospitals that encourage it.
- Read for the blind. Connect with an Institute for the Blind in your area to set this up.

¹ See this article about the impact of Waukegan to College. Emily K. Coleman. [Waukegan Nonprofit Adds Peer Mentorship for First-Generation, Minority College Students](#) [Waukegan to College], by Emily K. Coleman, *Chicago Tribune News-Sun*, Jan 07, 2018

- Help in daycare centers after school. (All day care facilities will require background checks and an interview. Do it together.)
- Pack and distribute food for a food pantry
- Collect and distribute clothes.
- Collect books, toys, and clothes for victims of natural disasters
- Help to develop an online newsletter for a local community center that doesn't already have one.
- Help to deliver Meals on Wheels. (Locate a local agency that performs this service.)
- Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity or other similar agency in your local area.
- Participate in the Martin Luther King Day of Service in January.

Vocation Building Activities

- Invite the mentee to discuss several career paths of interest and together determine ways to gain knowledge and experience related to key interests.
- Introduce the youth or young adult to at least three of your contacts who would be helpful in their career choices or vocation building. Before the meetings, discuss questions to ask or issues to raise with the contact. Review the conversations afterwards.
- If it's a factor, discuss how culture has affected your adjustment to a vocation or ministry role.
- Consult a mock interview for a job; discuss how to dress for an interview; fill out a sample job application.
- Invite the mentee to one or more of your staff or other organizational meetings. Prepare them beforehand and debrief afterward.
- Have the mentee observe you in your vocational role. Prepare beforehand and debrief afterward.
- Provide specific suggestions and examples for their résumé.
- Work on employment applications.
- Let the mentee listen as appropriate to vocationally related conference calls. Be certain your callers are informed and agree.
- Go with the youth or young adult to events (e.g., conferences, cultural events) important to them and to their vocational goals.
- Become a "consultant" when needed related to a mentee's project or job-related activity.
- Provide visibility for the mentee in a vocational area they are exploring.
- Suggest that the youth or young adult interview at least five people satisfied with their particular vocational decisions, and five who have experienced difficulties as a result of their decisions. Ask the mentee to present the results of the interviews in a suitable context.
- Have fruitful discussions related to vocational goals while driving in your car to and from meetings and other events.

- Help the mentee develop a business plan.
- Explain some of the unwritten practices you've learned in your own vocation.
- Talk about practices that affect gender and racial identity.
- Tell how you used the mentee's advice in solving a problem or in completing a project in your own vocation.

Professional and Skill Development Activities

- Encourage the mentee to set up a small team to which they'll hold themselves accountable for their development. This team might meet as a group or simply offer one-on-one support.
- Suggest a community setting in which the youth or young adult could develop specific skills.
- Practice situations the youth or young adult will face. For example, role-play an important meeting: how to prepare for it, how to craft an agenda, how to keep the dialogue moving, how to summarize main points, and so on.
- Discuss your respective cultural values and practices; identify those that are of particular importance to you.
- The mentee may want to talk about risks, difficulties, interpersonal conflict, misunderstanding, or stress that they have experienced or expect to face in the near future. Plan together how these might be minimized or used as a learning opportunity.
- Email potentially useful links to articles or other resources to the youth or young adult.
- Read a book together (e.g., biography of an effective leader, history of a culture not your own).
- Offer to edit or comment on a letter, proposal, or other document that the youth or young adult has written.
- Ask the mentee for specific feedback on something you wrote or on an action taken.
- Co-author a short article with the youth or young adult. If it is something that you publish, give credit.
- Suggest a presentation the mentee could make to a group.
- Have the mentee complete specific tasks on one of your projects. Be certain that these tasks will be of benefit to them and not just free labor!
- Have the mentee observe you (or someone else) doing something challenging and difficult in a vocation.
- Be a "shadow consultant" on parts of projects the youth or young adult is doing. Discuss the steps, decisions, strategies, and feelings. Have them explain how decisions were made and note any patterns and inconsistencies that need work. Ask thought-provoking, open-ended questions that help the mentee think in new ways; questions such as "What if that didn't happen?" "Imagine this scenario . . . What would you do?"
- Have the youth or young adult teach you something.

- Observe (or videotape) the mentee's presentation. Get permission to give feedback privately.
- Send the youth or young adult to represent you at a meeting or conference. Prepare them for the event.
- Attend a leadership or professional conference together. • Engage in team building, or leadership development activities.
- Take a course or workshop with the youth or young adult.
- Do volunteer work together. Serve on a committee or provide physical labor for causes that you and your mentee support.
- Communicate your belief in the mentee's capacity to grow personally and professionally.
- Respond to the mentee's frustrations and challenges with words of support, understanding, and encouragement.

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to mentoring activities. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[50 Mentoring Questions That Spark Revival](#) by Leslie Bennett. *Revive Our Hearts*. January 2024

[Mentoring Activities: 10+ Mentoring Activities to Boost Engagement in 2025](#) by Sam Cook. *MentorcliQ*, August 2025

[Connecting Through Conversation: Short Activities for Mentors](#). Center for *Supportive Schools*, 2017

[Mentoring Activities: 22 Mentoring Session Ideas to Try](#) by Nick Saraev. *Together*. October 2024

[50 Mentoring Activities You Need to Try](#) by Emily Ryan. *Mentorloop*. December 2022

[75 Things to do with Your Mentees: Practical and Effective Development Ideas You Can Try](#) by Linda Phillips-Jones, 2003

[10 Mentoring Activities for Adult Training & Teaching](#) by Paul Symonds. *Symonds Research*, 2025. Employee training activities.

[100 ideas to Use When Mentoring Youth: Activities and Conversations to Help Your Mentees Excel](#) by Linda Phillips-Jones, Ph.D., Jean Ann Walth, B.A., and Carlo Walth, B.A., M.Div. *The Mentoring Group*, 2001

[52 Mentor Activities: An activity for each week!](#) *Connecting Generations*, 2016



How Are We Doing?

Essentially, evaluation is asking three questions: What is working, why? What isn't working, why not? What could we do differently?

The following material has been adapted from several sources for the periodic review of your mentoring relationship. A personal, conversational review is recommended and some of the questions may be used for that purpose.

However, a program leader may wish to use a survey form periodically to help identify areas of improvement, difficulty, and achievement. If your program is designed around specific goals, develop questions to determine the extent to which those goals are being met.

Sample Questions

After 2-4 months, the mentoring partners should take time to mutually reflect on their mentoring relationship: its benefits, next steps, resources needed, areas to improve, and so on. Some of the following questions may be adapted for this purpose.

- How would you describe our mentoring relationship?
- What goals were achieved as a result of our mentoring relationship? What goals need to be modified? What goals should be added?
- What has made the time and energy we have invested in this mentoring relationship worthwhile? What could we do better?
- Did we meet often enough? Too often? In what ways have the meetings helped establish our mentoring relationship?
- In what areas has the mentoring relationship been most effective?
- What skills or new abilities were gained or improved as a result of our mentoring relationship?
- How specifically could we improve the mentoring relationship?

- What specifically makes this mentoring relationship effective?
- What activities have been most beneficial?
- What learning experiences or additional resources would be useful at this point in our mentoring relationship?
- Would you participate in another mentoring relationship? Why? Why not?

There are tensions and difficulties in any relationship, including a mentoring relationship. Ask each other what specifically creates tension or difficulties in the mentoring relationship? For example,

- Lack of trust
- Failure to show respect for difference (e.g., culture, economic status, social background, education)
- Betrayal of confidentiality
- Mentoring meetings seldom take priority
- Unclear purpose for the mentoring relationship
- Unrealistic expectations
- Lack of organizational support
- Difficulty in getting together
- Inadequate communication

If too many of these difficulties are present, seek help from a program coordinator or advisor. However, there are steps that can be taken to improve a relationship. Ask each other what could be done to improve it.

SAMPLE FORMS

The above questions may be inserted into the forms below; and the forms may be adapted for your context. See also [Example Membership Training Surveys](#)

Sample Evaluation Form #1

Mentoring Relationship Review

A review every few months helps to focus both benefits and areas that need improvement. As the mentoring relationship proceeds, such questions become more natural and useful. Unless otherwise specified, each question is to be answered by both mentor and young adult(s).

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. At what point, or after what experiences in the mentoring relationship did you begin to feel that you had an equal stake in building the relationship?

2. In what ways has the mentoring relationship benefitted you?

3. What areas do you feel could be improved?

4. *For the mentor:* In what ways were you prepared for the role of mentor? In what areas could you use some support or training? What additional resources do you need to fulfill your role adequately?

5. *For the mentor:* What suggests to you that you and the young adult(s) have established a productive mentoring relationship? Please share any additional comments that would benefit the program and/or the mentoring relationship:

6. *For the mentee:* In what ways has this mentoring relationship met your expectations? How might you have been better prepared for the mentoring relationship?

7. *For the mentee:* I could use more guidance from my mentor in the following areas:

8. Please share any additional comments:

Sample Evaluation Form #2

Mentoring Relationship Final Review

A review of this sort is recommended just before or just after the mentoring relationship ends. The questions may be used in a questionnaire format, or as a guide for a face-to-face review. Unless specified, each question is to be answered by both mentor and young adult(s).

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. What were some of the highlights of your mentoring relationship?

2. In what ways did the mentoring relationship contribute to your mutual personal and spiritual development?

3. *For the mentee:* How did the mentoring relationship help you achieve the goals you listed at the beginning of the mentoring relationship? What aspects of the mentoring relationship were not as helpful, or could have been improved?

4. *For the mentor:* On the basis of this experience, would you take on another mentoring role? Why? Why not?

5. *For the mentee:* On the basis of this experience, do you believe you could become a mentor? Why? Why not? What specific aspects of the mentoring relationship were most meaningful?

6. Please share any additional comments:

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to evaluating mentoring programs. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[Getting Started with Program Evaluation.](#) *Mentor.*

[How to Set & Measure Mentoring Program Objectives](#) by Kira Fickenscher. *Chronus*, October 2024

[Measurement Guidance Toolkit](#) *National Mentoring Resource Center*



Best Practices for Mentoring Programs

The following has been adapted from “Research-informed and practitioner-approved best practices for creating and sustaining impactful mentoring relationships and strong program services.”¹ The items in each section could be further adapted as a checklist when evaluating established or developing mentoring programs in your context.²

1. Best Practices for Recruitment

- Recruitment strategies are realistic about the benefits, practices, supports, and challenges of the mentoring ministry.
- Selection requirements exist for mentors and mentees in the mentoring program.
- Recruitment strategies build positive attitudes about mentoring.
- Multiple strategies are used to recruit mentors and mentees (e.g., direct ask, social media, mass communication, presentation, referrals).
- The background, skills, and motivations of prospective mentors are consistent with the purposes of the mentoring ministry.
- Mentors and youth and young adults are encouraged to assist with recruitment efforts by suggesting others they know who meet the selection criteria of the ministry.
- Mentees are encouraged to identify and recruit mentors for themselves when appropriate.
- Youth and young adults are recruited whose needs and potential are consistent with the purposes of the mentoring ministry.
- Mentees are encouraged to recruit peers to be mentees whose needs and potential are consistent with the purposes of the mentoring ministry.

¹ Adapted from Michael Garringer, Janis Kupersmidt, Jean Rhodes, Rebecca Salter, and Tammy Tai. *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring*. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2015, pp. 11, 25-26, 35-38, 55, 61-62, 71-72. Purchase the 5th edition from Amazon or download the full text PDF of the 5th edition [here](#).

² Purchase the 5th edition from Amazon or download the full text PDF of the 5th edition [here](#)

2. Best Practices for Screening Potential Participants in Mentoring Relationships

- Mentor applicants or potential mentors give evidence of personal and spiritual maturity.
- Suitable screening tools and practices are used to identify those whose attitudes and beliefs support safe and effective mentoring relationships.
- Criteria exist for accepting mentors and mentees into the program, as well as criteria that will disqualify applicants.
- Prospective mentors complete an application to help assess their suitability. (See section in this Handbook, “Mentoring Programs: Templates & Sample Forms” for forms that can be adapted for your use.)
- Each prospective mentor and young adult is interviewed at least once to help assess their suitability for a mentoring relationship. Representative questions include:
 - o What is motivating you to become a mentor?
 - o Why do you think you would be a good mentor to a youth or young adult?
 - o What strengths would you bring to a mentoring relationship?
 - o In what ways might a mentoring experience contribute to your development?
 - o Have you had other experiences as a mentor or mentee? Tell me about them?
 - o What do you do currently? What do you find most challenging, or most rewarding about your current situation?
 - o Do you have any hobbies? Other interests? Tell me about them.
 - o How do you respond to situations that may be outside your comfort zone? For example, relating across cultural, economic, or social lines. Tell me a story of an occasion where you interacted with a person(s) from a racially diverse background.
 - o What situations cause you the most stress?
 - o What situations bring you the greatest satisfaction?
- Criminal background checks are required for prospective adult mentors and include a search of a national criminal records database, sex offender and child abuse registries and, when relevant, driving records.
- Reference check interviews are conducted in person or by telephone with multiple adults who know the prospective mentor.
- Typically, prospective mentors and young adults agree to at least a one-year commitment for the mentoring relationship, understanding that there may be incompatibilities that will lead to earlier closure of the mentoring relationship.
- Typically, prospective mentors and mentees agree to meet at minimum once a week, typically face-to-face, averaging about four hours per month.
- Mentors and mentees typically are asked to sign a statement indicating their agreement to participate in the program.

3. Best Practices for Training

- A minimum of two hours of mentor training is provided. Similar training may be provided for mentees; or mentor and mentee may be involved together in one or more training sessions. Topics and skills such as the following may be included in workshops:

- o Protocols: duration of meetings, how to deal sporadic meeting attendance, establishing goals and expectations, obligations and appropriate roles, financial policies, evaluation options, procedures for effective closure of the mentoring relationship.
- o Ideas for the mentoring relationship: initiating the relationship, ideas for mentoring activities, available resources and support, mentoring specific populations of youth or young adults.
- o Risk management: appropriate physical contact and other safeguards when meeting, ethics and safety issues, contact information in case of emergency or crisis, mandatory report requirements (e.g., suspected abuse or neglect, suicidal or homicidal suspicions), confidentiality, understanding confidentiality restrictions in health and medical care, social media use (including appropriate photo and image use), overnight visits, out of town travel, transportation policies, substance abuse, firearms and other weapons, including others in mentoring meetings and activities, grievance procedures. (See below on monitoring and techniques for troubleshooting and early identification of problems.)³

Additional training may be provided in such areas as the following:

- o Effects of developmental characteristics of youth and young adults on the mentoring relationship.
- o The ways in which culture, gender, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, and religion may affect the mentoring relationship.
- o Dealing with conflict and differences in the mentoring relationship.
- o Topics tailored to the needs and characteristics of the mentees.

4. Best Practices in Matching Mentors and Mentees

- Characteristics such as interests, availability, age, gender, race and ethnicity, personality, personal expectations, among others are considered when making matches.
- Ministry leaders may arrange and may be present during an initial meeting between the mentor and mentee to deal with questions or explain support helps.
- Mentor and mentee may sign a commitment agreement that includes specific aspects of the mentoring relationship such as frequency and duration of meetings, contact information, roles of each person, confidentiality, and relevant risk management issues.

5. Best Practices for Mentors⁴

- A mentor is a “learning facilitator” rather than the person with all the answers.
- A mentor will guide the youth or young adult to other resources when additional wisdom and experience is needed.

³ See [Managing Risk After the Match is Made](#) for useful information about ways to prevent questionable or harmful situations from arising

⁴ This section is adapted from [Mentoring Guide: A Guide for Mentors](#). Center for Health Leadership & Practice A Center of the Public Health Institute, Oakland, CA, 2003. See Appendix 1: Mentoring Best Practices, p. 11)

- The mentor asks effective questions that encourage the youth or young adult to think more broadly and deeply. For example, if they talk only about facts, ask about feelings. If they focus on feelings, ask them to review the facts. If they seem stuck in an immediate crisis, help them see the big picture, or to think through how to get help.
- A mentor shares experiences and lessons learned. These are used as examples rather than as a blueprint for solving the mentee's problems. The mentor helps the youth or young adult see alternative interpretations and approaches.
- A mentor helps the youth or young adult reflect on successful strategies they have used in the past that could apply to new challenges.
- The mentor resists the temptation to control the relationship and steer its outcomes; the mentee is responsible for their own growth.
- The mentor builds confidence through supportive feedback by encouraging, inspiring and challenging the youth or young adult to achieve their goals.
- The mentor is open to feedback about the quality of the mentoring relationship and works with the mentee to improve.
- The mentor knows that a mentoring relationship benefits both the mentor and the youth or young adult.

7. Best Practices for Troubleshooting and Support

- Techniques for troubleshooting and early identification of problems have been developed in the mentoring ministry.
- Ministry leaders contact mentors and young adults about once a month during the first few months of the mentoring relationship and occasionally after that until the mentoring relationship comes to close.
- Ministry leaders pay attention to matters such as the value of activities, quality of the relationship, outcomes and other matters of importance to the continued effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.
- Ministry leaders, mentor and mentee, and if necessary an external advisor should assess factors that allow participants to determine whether or not the mentoring relationship should close or continue.
- Mentors are made aware of relevant resources (e.g., experts, publications, digital resources, social services, other mentors) to help them deal with challenges.
- About once a year, training opportunities are offered.
- Group meetings are organized to provide conversation and sharing of resources across the mentoring relationships.

8. Best Practices for Effective Closure of the Mentoring Relationship

- Procedures are in place to manage anticipated and unanticipated closures, including situations where one member of the match is unwilling to engage the closure process.
- Procedures include an exit interview for participants in the mentoring relationship. Topics discussed during the interview may include such matters as feelings concerning the closure, reasons for the closure if relevant, benefits of the mentoring relationship, advisability of post-closure contact, creation of a plan for post-closure contact if relevant, opportunities for another mentoring relationship.
- Procedures include policies for establishing new mentoring relationships.
- The ministry may provide training as to how youth or young adults can identify and connect with the natural mentors in their lives.
- The ministry hosts a final celebration gathering for mentors and mentees.

Additional Resources

These resources are specific to evaluating mentoring programs. See Additional Resources at the end of this Handbook for other resources for your mentoring ministry.

[Mentoring Practices: Listening Well](#) by Rob Loane. A Mentoring Way, August 2021

[10 Successful Mentoring Program Best Practices](#) by Amanda Schneiders. Chronus. January 2025

[Mentee Best Practices](#). *It's Your Yale*.

[The Five Secrets of the Best Mentoring Programs](#). *Forbes*, September 2022

[Best Practices in Mentoring](#). *University of Louisville, Professional Development Center*

[Best Practices for Mentors and Mentees in Academic Settings](#). *Michigan State University*.
(Transferable concepts)

*“Effective mentoring relationships
provide a safe environment for reflection...”*





Checklist for Starting a Mentoring Program

Mentoring may be the informal, individually planned relationships between a mentor and one or more mentees; or, given the number of available resources and knowing the far-reaching impact of mentoring in the lives of youth and young adults, the congregation may develop a more formal mentoring ministry.

When establishing a mentoring program, first enlist a person or small team to champion the initiative. The person or team may recruit others from the congregation and from among the youth and young adults to take on or help with specific tasks such as the following:

- Describe the purpose of a mentoring initiative.
- Identify guiding principles (e.g., confidentiality, boundaries).
- Find out how many youth and young adults would welcome a mentoring relationship.
- Establish a process for how mentors will be recruited and selected.
- Enlist people with ability and knowledge in needed areas to create (and possibly lead) basic training workshops for mentors and mentees.
- Sort through resources and make them available to the mentoring teams.
- Inform mentors and mentees of communication channels for information or troubleshooting.
- Create three levels of evaluation: (1) using resources in this Handbook, prepare about a half page of questions that mentoring teams may choose from to reflect on their mentoring relationships (typically after 3-4 months); (2) using resources in this Handbook, prepare questions, a form, or interview guideline for mentoring teams who have been together for about a year; and (3) prepare a short list of reflection questions for mentoring teams to select from when the mentoring relationship is coming to a close.

Information in this Handbook may be adapted as you work through your checklist. Additional resources are available with useful information, ideas that can be adapted, and training courses that are available usually for a fee. For example:

- A Beginner's Guide to Christian Mentoring. Access this resource [here](#). Background for Life. Church is available [here](#).

- Free resources are available [here](#).
- SIL¹ Robust Mentoring – A Mentoring Matters initiative for the African Church. Access the “Robust Mentoring” eBook [here](#). Access downloadable sample templates [here](#). Click the tabs for other resources.
- Click to download [The Mentoring eBook](#): A guide to the concept of Christian mentoring.²
- [How to Develop a Mentoring Program](#) by Richard Krejcir.
- “Growing leaders for growing churches” resources are available from the Church Pastoral Aid Society (CPAS). Their resources may suggest ideas for your own mentoring ministry with youth, in particular. See the overview of their newly developed “Growing Leaders Youth” course [here](#). Their “Growing Young Leaders offers practical guidance for all those mentoring 13-18 year olds in a faith context, with a view to nurturing them towards leadership roles.” Access the overview [here](#). Also available at [Amazon](#)
- The National Mentoring Resource Center is a key resource for organizations invested in mentoring youth and young adults. See their extensive resources [here](#).
- [How to Build a Mentoring Program: A Mentoring Program Toolkit](#) Leadership Development Program, 2010
- How to Build an Effective Mentoring Program Using the Elements of Effective Practice: A Step-by-Step Tool Kit for Program Managers.” eBook. *MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership*, 2005. The full text eBook is available [here](#).³
- Go to [5 Step Guide for Successful Mentorship Programs](#) Scroll down the page to the free download: “How to Start a High Impact Mentoring Program.” Chronus resources.

A final word . . .

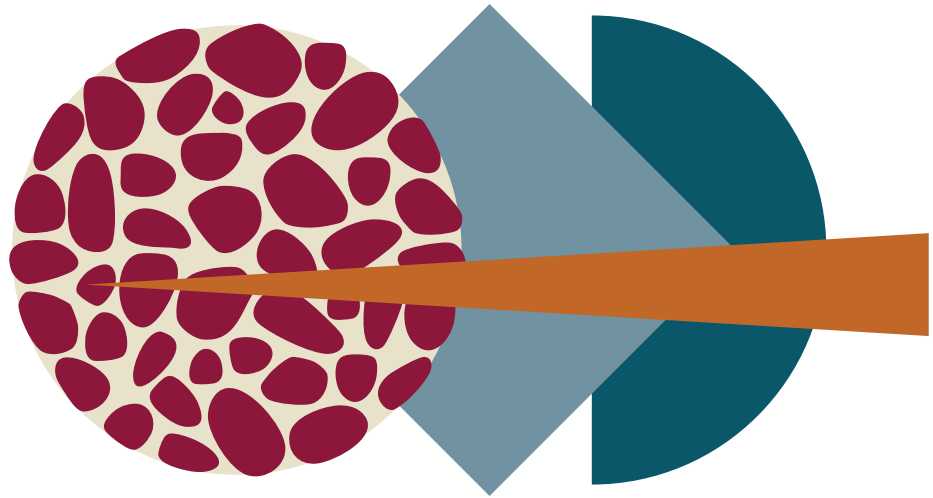
There is no shortage of “how to” information, as you will see from the resources above. If you are tempted to use the information to create a massively structured design and enormously detailed manual, RESIST!

Outline the basic elements of your mentoring ministry with a sentence or two of description for each. Your board or leadership team will appreciate a proposal of about 3-5 pages! Then as the ministry unfolds, draw on available resources (this Handbook, the links above, and others you find) for the necessary detail. Focus more on active implementation than producing lengthy descriptions of what you should or will do.

¹ Formerly Summer Institute of Linguistics

² It is a resource of [Brentwood Baptist Church](#), Brentwood, TN. They prioritize mentoring as part of their emphasis on discipleship.

³ This document, while still useful, is based on an older edition of *Elements of Effective Practice*. Purchase the 5th edition from Amazon or download the full text PDF of the 5th edition [here](#).



Crisis Intervention

Mandatory Reporting Information

While the laws concerning abuse and neglect of children do not identify volunteers as mandatory reporters, they are nonetheless “encouraged to report suspected child abuse and neglect” to clergy who are mandatory reporters. Train volunteers in the signs of abuse. For instance, in some cases (as with “Mongolian spots”¹ on some Asian, Hispanic, African American, and Native American children) a bruise may not signify abuse. See [Supporting Illinois Children and Families](#) for information on how to report suspected abuse.

Each state has laws concerning mandatory reporting. Information (in English and Spanish) concerning mandatory reporting in Illinois:

- [Training for Mandatory Reporters](#)
- [Manual for Mandated Reporters](#) (2020)
- [Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect](#)

With regard to mentoring relationships with youth and young adults, there are certain things that mentors should never be expected to handle without support. Youth and young adults may require intervention in areas such as harassment, addiction, criminal involvement, abuse or neglect, suicidal behavior or threat of suicide, and mental illness. See information at the [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration](#).

¹ Mongolian spots are harmless, flat birthmarks that can be mistaken for bruises because of their bluish color. They are caused by pigment cells in the skin, not by injury.

Confidentiality and trust go together. But when the safety of the youth or young adult, or others affected by them is an issue, confidentiality cannot be maintained. You might tell youth and young adult(s) that information they share with you will be kept in confidence; but advise them that there are certain situations you must report because of their potential to do harm to them or others. For example, abuse, involvement in illegal activity, potential harm to oneself (e.g., suicidal threats), violence toward others, drug or alcohol abuse. Be clear that resources and help are available and that an issue will be shared with appropriate personnel and dealt with in an appropriate manner. Early in the mentoring relationship discuss with the mentee what should be or could be done if such issues come to light, and what resources are available.

In some cases, youth and young adults live in situations where they see abuse, mental illness, or violence frequently. If you discover that this is the case, you might discuss ways to stay safe or where to go for help if they need to intervene or are in danger. Often it is difficult for a mentor to determine what should be reported and what requires support. [Responsible Mentoring: Talking About Drugs, Sex and Other Difficult Issues – The Mentoring Plus Workshop Series](#) distinguishes among issues that are “delicate”, those that are “of concern” and “crises requiring intervention”.

“Delicate” Issues are identified as sex, peer pressure, hygiene, self-image and insecurities, and cultural identity. The mentor is advised to handle such issues with sensitivity and, typically, to discuss them when the mentee initiates such a conversation.

“Issues of Concern” are identified as unsafe sex, fighting, delinquent behavior, gang involvement, drug and alcohol use, including vaping. The mentor is advised to discuss such matters with the relevant leadership. These issues may not require direct intervention; but they may be persisting conditions that youth and young adults face. Mentors may need training in how to support the mentee without judging them; and without trying to force behavior change. Over time, with appropriate personal and spiritual support, they may be able to help the mentee deal with the problems.

“Crises Requiring Intervention” are identified as serious abuse and neglect, drug and alcohol addiction, severe violence, criminal behavior, depression and/or threat to commit suicide, debilitating mental illness. These are serious issues and most require immediate intervention or reporting to the appropriate authority; and the mentor should never have to manage such crises alone.

In matters that affect them the need for youth and young adults to make their own decisions, or at least engage in responsible discussion of the issue, should be respected. Part of the role of a mentor is to assist the mentee to learn necessary skills, clarify values and beliefs, reflect on their behavior, and learn to make wise choices. The following tips for mentors are from the [Responsible Mentoring: Talking About Drugs, Sex and Other Difficult Issues – The Mentoring Plus Workshop Series](#) manual, p. 26:

- Focus on his/her feelings and needs rather than jumping to problemsolving.
- When the issue has been talked about, ask, ‘What do you think you would like to do about this situation,’ and ‘How would you like for me to help?’

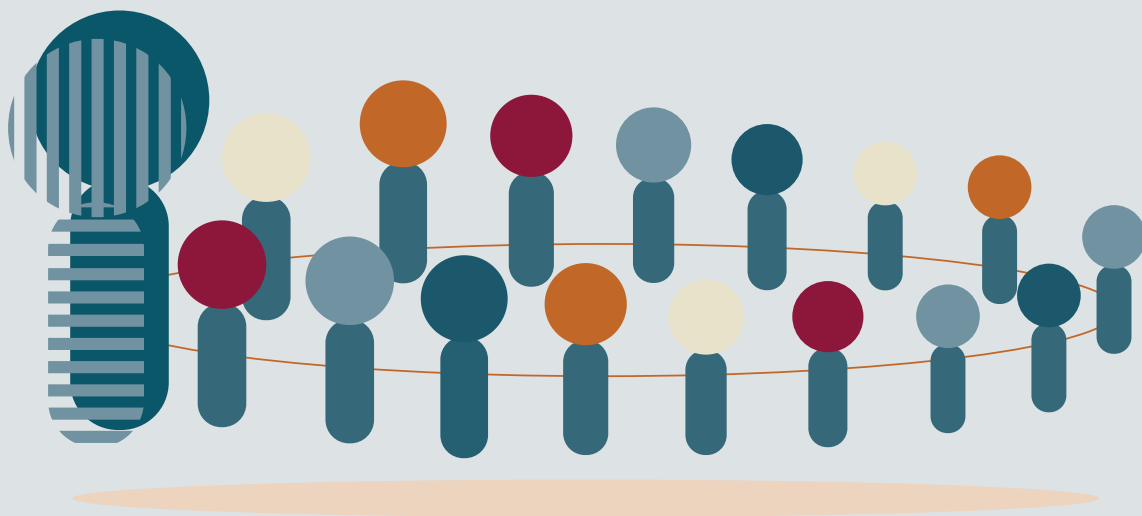
- If you are not comfortable with what (s)he wants to do, ask yourself why before you decide whether to say so.
- If what (s)he wants to do is not possible, explain gently and apologize.
- Ask what alternative solutions would make him/her comfortable.
- Encourage critical thinking through questions and reflections.
- Use the words, ‘I don’t know — what do you think?’

Violence, Racial Profiling, Injustice

Mentors may help youth and young adults process the trauma resulting from persisting inequality, prejudice, racism, police profiling and violence, and so on. While oriented to youth, [Supporting Youth People in the Wake of Trauma](#) provides resources that may be adapted to mentoring relationships with young adults. Additional resources, ideas, and support; along with the encouragement to discuss the violence that affects families and agencies within local communities are included. The mentoring relationship becomes a safe place where mentors and youth or young adults can explore and consider possible responses to discrimination related to race, gender, class, sexuality, and so on. The mentor may ask such questions as, “How can I help?” “What do you think are ways to positively address this issue or situation?” If the mentee is faced with the need to report a situation, provide contact information to suitable agencies; and if desired, accompany them to the agency. Many youth or young adults express the desire to help the next generation navigate the issues that threaten them. Consider adapting ideas and information from the links in “Supporting Young People in the Wake of Violence and Trauma” (see above) that suit your context to create resources and strategies that will help youth and young adults mentor the next generation. See also [Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Traumatic Events](#)

Mentoring has become increasingly urgent in prison populations and among those newly released. “Research has consistently demonstrated the importance of adequate social support for those attempting to reenter society. Positive social connections can boost the likelihood of a whole range of beneficial outcomes . . . Not all of those who are reentering society as former offenders have a significant number of positive social relationships, however, and recent efforts have attempted to supplement that shortfall by utilizing a mentoring model”. While the disproportionate number of incarcerated young men from racially diverse backgrounds, and particularly from African American populations, is more than disturbing, women also are at “heightened risk of substance abuse, experiencing physical abuse, and suffering from mental illhealth both pre and post-incarceration relative to their male peers. While their risks are daunting, women in the criminal justice system have also been shown to be receptive to the opportunity to develop the kind of positive relationships that mentoring can offer”.²

² [Mentors Serve as ‘Facilitators of Change’ for Ex-Offenders](#) by Justin Preston. The Chronicle of Evidence Based Mentoring. March 15, 2016. This article is a summary of research at Garcia, J. (2015). The Importance of the Mentor–Mentee Relationship in Women’s Desistance [cessation or stopping] from Destructive Behaviors. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*



*....mentoring supports future leadership,
increases retention, thus reducing
the significant costs of recruiting and
training new employees.*



Corporate Mentoring: Anything Congregations Can Use or Adapt?

In 2017, Mel Jones reported that 70% of Fortune 500 companies and about 25% of smaller companies have mentoring programs.¹ (This was updated in 2023 to 92% for Fortune 500 companies.)² The benefits, one would think, are obvious: mentoring supports future leadership, increases retention, thus reducing the significant costs of recruiting and training new employees – and increases diversity when women, generational differences, and people from racially diverse backgrounds are taken seriously. However, some companies report problems with mentoring: little to no executive commitment and the formulaic procedures which many employees find unhelpful and impersonal.

Also, some mentoring programs are established by people who have never been mentored, and who base the program on older corporate models where employees stayed at one job or with one company while advancing gradually through the ranks. This model presumes that one-on-one mentoring programs where an older (typically white male) meets more or less regularly and informally with a younger (typically white male) are the norm. Further, the pressures of the global marketplace often strain profit margins and mentoring initiatives are, therefore, underfunded or cut altogether.

Successful programs in the corporate sector are funded appropriately and have the short-term services of a competent consultant who trains a mentoring director and ensures that necessary skills are developed (e.g., listening and how to get feedback, budgeting, use of communication technology and software needed to enable mentoring participants to meet electronically when necessary or desired).

Mentoring programs in business tend to be more structured because mentoring teams also deal with specific matters related to employment, advancement, professional as well as personal development, corporate skills, occasional engagement with corporate executives, and so on. Mentoring programs

¹ Mel Jones. [Why Can't Companies Get Mentorship Programs Right?](#) *The Atlantic*. Jun 2, 2017.

² [How to Create a Successful Mentorship Program](#) by Harvey Deutschendorf. *Fast Company*. July 2023. The author reports on the benefits of mentoring in the workplace and gives tips about how to create an effective program. Access requires a \$1 subscription to *Fast Company*.

will benefit a corporation; but if done poorly they can lead to stories such as this: “. . . it’s hard to fix mentoring programs if employers don’t ask for feedback and employees don’t tell them what’s wrong. . . . When I reached out to a group of elite, professional women about their experiences with workplace-based mentoring, hardly anyone volunteered to share stories on the record, for fear of professional blowback. One woman simply wrote, ‘Try to avoid formal programs at all costs. Torture’”.³

It should also be noted that there is a shortage of mentors for women in corporate contexts.⁴ Now, with rightful resistance to harassment in the workplace many men are reluctant to mentor women. Wendy Murphy offered advice for men who see the importance of mentors for women, but who are nervous to assume that role: be intentional in seeking out women, be transparent, listen and identify opportunities, acknowledge gender issues, and help women make connections.⁵

Mentoring Models

Basic models focused on recruiting, training, and overseeing the mentoring process include the following:

- One-on-one mentoring where someone typically older and more experienced, mentors a typically younger and less experienced person is most common.
- Group mentoring reflects the typical corporate team structure and involves one mentor meeting more or less regularly with a small group.
- In peer mentoring, men or women of similar experience and work role meet one-on-one or in small groups for support and to share knowledge and skills.
- Occasionally a junior person will mentor a more senior person for specific learning or support. This so-called reverse mentoring typically results in mutual learning.
- Training-based mentoring focuses on the development of specific skills or areas of knowledge pertinent to one’s role in a company. It is typically short-term with low priority given to relationship building.
- Executive mentoring, while more demanding of those who lead the organization, could support and sustain a mentoring culture through the organization. It could also contribute to effective succession planning.
- E-mentoring. Given the fluid nature of the workplace, e-mentoring allows mentoring relationships to function even at a distance.

Mentors and mentees may be matched through a managed interview process; or those desiring a mentor may choose a mentor who has volunteered their availability. Corporate mentoring typically matches mentors and mentees through a formal mentoring program in order to ensure the “right fit” for the job. While mentoring is not uncommon in corporate settings, often it is less than

³ Jones, 2017

⁴ See “lean in circles” for women” as a supporting resource. Access information about this resource [here](#).

⁵ Wendy Murphy. [Advice for Men Who Are Nervous About Mentoring Women](#). *The Harvard Business Review*, March 15, 2019.

effective due to lack of executive involvement, minimal financial support, and inadequate mentor training. Mentor support groups are recommended to allow mentors to share experiences and ideas, encourage one another, and discuss problems. Mentees are encouraged to develop a “personal board of directors—a diverse group of mentors and advocates with different areas and levels of specialization . . .”⁶

Lester Wright, director of the award winning Mentoring Matters program at the Goddard Space Flight Center, NASA, maintains that mentoring will show positive results if used properly.

According to Wright, much of the problem with corporate mentorship programs is that they miss an opportunity to create a formal, structured path for mentors and mentees. Outside of work, there are plenty of informal mentorship opportunities, but companies have the opportunity to facilitate more directly impactful relationships—and they often squander it. This becomes a more pressing issue as more and more workers age into retirement, since companies risk losing a wealth of data and information as millions of people exit the workforce without passing much of it on.⁷

Businesses committed to ethnic and gender diversity may use mentoring to build relationships across barriers, to encourage mutual understanding, to develop working teams, and so on. Authentic commitment at the executive levels, inclusiveness (among mentors and mentees), and diverse elements in program design and training to reflect various cultural and personal backgrounds are important factors in these efforts.⁸

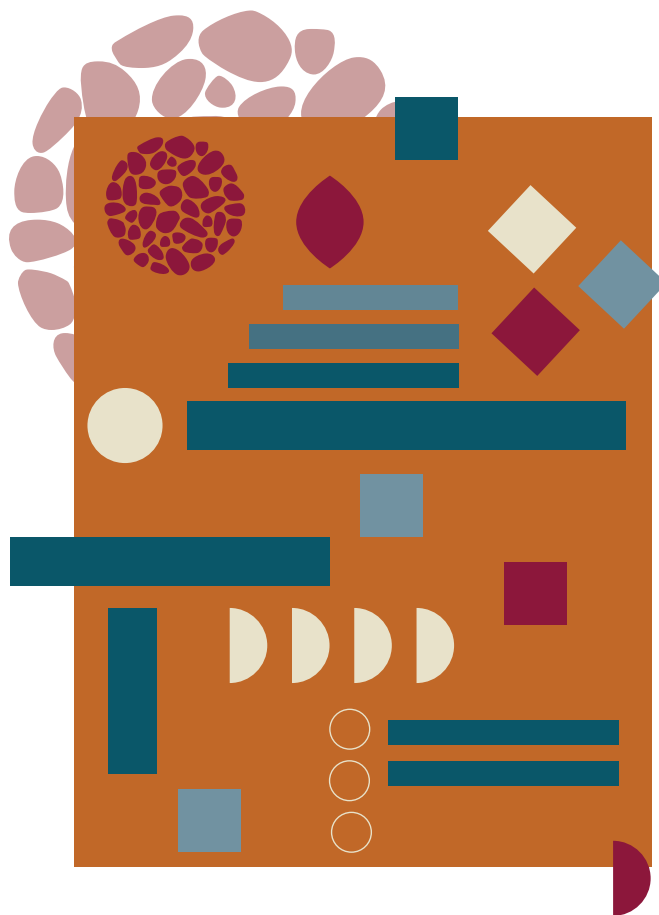
As more workplaces embrace cutting-edge communications technologies, mentoring is no longer being viewed as a one-size-fits-all proposition, especially [in] a technical organization such as NASA. Today’s modern mentoring is about having open, flexible learning relationships in which anyone can take part, anyone can share information and insights, and anyone can be a learner.⁹

⁶ Kandia Johnson. [5 Mentorship Misconceptions That May Be Holding You Back](#). *Black Enterprise Magazine*, April 1, 2018.

⁷ In Jones, 2017

⁸ See also [Personal Development: Why Today’s Young Leaders Need Individual Coaching and Mentoring; 5 Types of Mentoring for the Workplace; 10 Different Types of Mentoring in the Workplace](#).

⁹ [Mentoring Matters at NASA](#) by Lester Wright. Association for Talent Development. March 29, 2017.



Basic Templates and Sample Forms

Basic templates and sample forms adapted from several sources are included in this section. If you adapt any of these forms, select items and a format that are appropriate in your context.

Go to <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/resource/generic-mentoring-program-policy-and-procedure-manual/> and download the eBook Generic Mentoring Program: Policy and Procedure Manual. It contains many more templates and sample forms that may be adapted for your use.

Sample Application Form #1

We Can Help You Find a Mentor

If you wish to have a mentor, but don't know anyone who could be your mentor, we will help to match you with someone. Please give us the following information so that we can suggest possible mentors. You and the proposed mentor will approve the match before any mentoring relationship is established



Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone/Mobile #: _____

1. Why do you want to work with a mentor? Do you prefer your mentor to be of your gender and ethnicity?

2. Describe what you do best. What are you good at?

3. What would like to strengthen through working with a mentor?

4. What are your interests or hobbies?

5. Do you have someone in mind to suggest as a mentor?

Sample Application Form #1

Application to be a Mentor

The mentoring relationship is based on trust, common goals and expectations, and mutual respect. Please share the following information so that we have a basis for suggesting a young adult for you to mentor. You and the proposed young adult will approve the match before any mentoring relationship is established.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Telephone/Mobile #: _____

Please respond to the following:

1. Why do you want to be a mentor? Do you prefer to mentor someone of your gender and ethnicity?

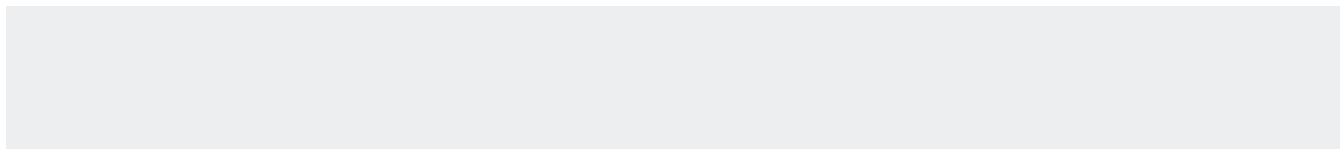
2. What are your preferences (check all that apply):

☐	To mentor one on one.	☐	To mentor a young adult who is new to this country and culture.
☐	To mentor a young adult who is new to this country and culture.	☐	To mentor a young adult whose interests match my own.
☐	To mentor a small group.	☐	To mentor a young adult who is trying to discern his or her purpose and calling.
☐	To mentor a young adult with disabilities.	☐	Other (please describe) _____

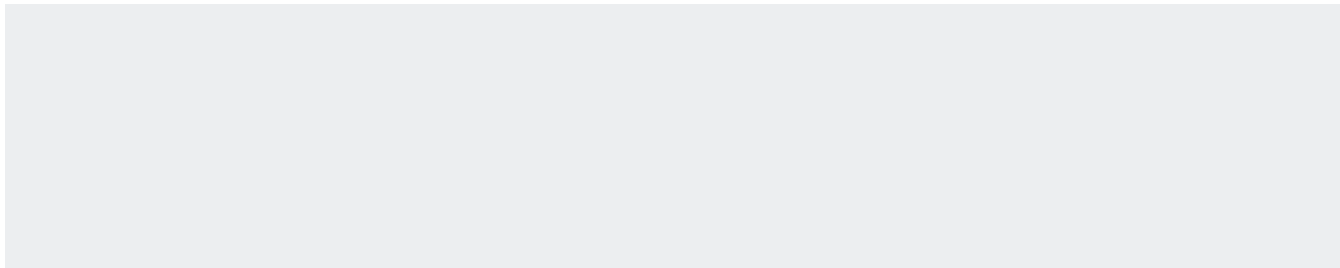
3. Identify your greatest strength(s):

4. What are your most satisfying interests or hobbies?

5. What do you believe a young adult(s) could learn from you?



6. How would you want us to support you in this service?



Sample Application Form #3

Reference Form

Please list three people as references.
They must have known you for at least a year. Do not list relatives.

1. Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone/Mobile #: _____
How long have you known this person? _____
Your relationship with this person _____

2. Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone/Mobile #: _____
How long have you known this person? _____
Your relationship with this person _____

3. Name: _____
Address: _____

Telephone/Mobile #: _____
How long have you known this person? _____
Your relationship with this person _____

Sample Form #4:

Questions to Ask of References

In an interview or as a printed response form

Here is a sampling of questions to ask of those submitted by the potential mentor as references:

- How long have you known _____ and in what capacity?
- What would you identify as _____ strengths as a mentor?
- What would you identify as limitations should _____ become a mentor?
- How well does _____ fulfill responsibilities?
- How well does _____ get along with others?
- Does _____ ever show disrespect to people of other cultural groups, social contexts, gender? Please describe. (Use below for comments)
- How would you describe _____ sensitivity toward others?
- To what extent does _____ show good listening skills?
- In your judgment, would this person be a good role model for young adults?
Yes ☐ No ☐
- What additional information or concerns would you like to share with us?
(Use below for comments.)

COMMENTS





Sample Form #5 Confidentiality Agreement

Personal information is shared in any mentoring relationship. To establish and sustain mutual trust, limits and clear boundaries must be agreed upon at the beginning of the relationship. The following statements may be used or adapted as you create your confidentiality agreement. You may decide on a verbal agreement after discussion; or you may sign an agreement and review it from time to time. What we discuss stays between us unless we give each other permission or ask that the information be shared with others.

Add other conditions to which you both agree. For example, what will you do if one member of the relationship shares something potentially harmful or criminal?

Mentor signature

Date

Mentee signature

Date

Sample Form #6

Mentoring Agreement

It may help to make a note of such things as meeting times,
number of meetings per month, how you will communicate with one another and so on.
The following form serves as a reminder and as a signed agreement.

Mentor: _____

Youth or Young Adult(s): _____

These are our preferred meeting days: _____

These are preferred meeting times: _____

We will meet (e.g., once a week, every other week) _____

We will meet generally for (how long?): _____

Who will take the lead (mostly) in planning for meetings? _____

What are the most important ground rules for our meetings?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What three things do we want to work on in the first six months of our mentoring relationship?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Best way to contact mentor _____

Best way to contact youth or young adult(s) _____

Each of us will always contact the other if something comes up that requires that we cancel or change the time/day of our meeting.

Mentor signature

Date

Mentee signature

Date

Sample Form #7

Planning the Mentoring Meeting

Place and date of meeting:

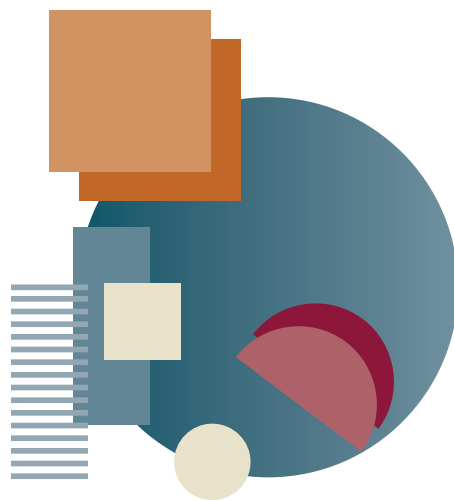
What we hope to achieve at the meeting:

Topics we intend to discuss:

Place and date of next meeting:

How might we improve our meeting times? (Use reverse if necessary)

Background Check Information and Services



It is sad that a section like this is needed; but it is. This section focuses on ways to screen for those who should not be mentors and lists some services that will do background checks for your church¹. While a background check may turn up something that won't necessarily disqualify a person from becoming a mentor, the following circumstances are always cause for rejection of an applicant:

- Prior history of abuse of children, sexual or otherwise.
- Conviction of any other crime in which children were involved.
- History of extreme violence or sexually exploitive behavior.
- Termination from a paid or volunteer position caused by misconduct with a child.²

On March 23, 2018, the Child Protection Improvements Act (CPIA) was signed into law. Barbara Oliver notes that this law “enables organizations serving vulnerable populations, such as children, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities to conduct fast, accurate, and affordable FBI background checks on prospective volunteers and employees”.³

Screening is one thing you will do to safeguard people and ministry. And it is important to limit screening to that which will confirm whether or not a volunteer or applicant for a staff position is suitable for the position. In other words, volunteers and applicants for staff positions have the right to have their privacy respected and to be treated fairly. Oliver cautions that many jurisdictions will exact penalties against organizations that wrongfully use information obtained from background checks. (Contact the Illinois State Police about laws pertaining to background checks in Illinois)⁴

The [American Camping Association](#) provides information on background checks and [State Laws and Regulations](#) concerning background checks. Explore the website for additional resources that may be of interest.

There are several types of background checks. Not all need to be used, and “fishing expeditions” are

¹ For information on background checks see [Eight Popular Background Checks for Volunteer Organizations](#) (2018), [Where to Get a Criminal Background Check](#) (2024), and [Background Check in Illinois](#)

² Barbara Oliver. [Guide to Screening and Background Checks](#). eBook. Mentoring Resource Center in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education, 2006.

³ [Child Protection Improvements Act Becomes Law](#). American Camping Association, March 26, 2018.

⁴ Oliver. [Guide to Screening and Background Checks](#), p. 10

not appropriate. Develop a policy to guide which types of searches are necessary for your ministry; then search available sites and registries or pay a company to conduct the search for you (see potential companies below). You should also ask for consent before doing a search. Access the eBook using the link in the box above and go to Appendix A-6, Sample #1, p. A-13 for a sample consent form for background checks.

Child abuse reporting and recognition. Each state provides information on preventing and reporting child abuse.

Credit checks. This search gives insight into the degree of financial responsibility and limits the possibility of fraud and theft.

Criminal checks. National criminal database searches will search all states for criminal records (search online for a company to do this for you or select one of the services listed later in this document). State background checks (fees and limitations vary from state to state) crimes committed in that state.

Department of Justice sex offender registries. See the [National Sex Offender Public Website](#) at and the [Illinois Sex Offender Database](#)

Drug testing. Drug screening will eliminate substance abusers and those who will do potential harm to others from the effects of drugs. See a list by state of [U.S. Drug Testing Centers](#)

Employment and education verification. In these searches contact past employers' human resource departments and/or contact educational institutions to confirm educational attainments.

I.D. verification. While a name-based check uses a person's name and social security number (SSN) to match any possible criminal records, the applicant could give you an alias and false SSN. A criminal database may have misspelled a name resulting in a search that pulls up a criminal record belonging to another person. Therefore, more than one sort of background check is advised.

Social media checks are becoming more common especially as social media sites can reveal both positive and negative information.

Organizations Offering Background Check Services

Consider using a company that, for a fee, will do comprehensive searches for you. Some of the following allow the applicant to pay the fee for their background check through their software platform—or you can build such checks into your mentoring program budget. Obviously all these organizations' screening services apply to all organizations; but some focus specifically on churches and other nonprofit religious organizations. (Also, check with your local police department. Some may provide free background checks of volunteers for churches.)

Background Checks

[Accurate and Affordable Background Checks for Volunteer Organizations](#)

[A Smarter, Easier and Safer Way to Volunteer](#)

[Background Screening & Identity Verification Solutions](#)

[Top Background Check Services for Employers: Compare the Best Companies](#)

[Where and How to Get a Background Check](#)

[Shepherd's Watch Background Checks. A Division of Group Publishing](#)

[The Complete Child Safety System from Ministry Safe](#)

Driving record report services will access driving history records for a fee. Services available include:

[Illinois Driving Records](#) report service

[National Employment Screening](#) (NES) offers a variety of screening options as well as IL driving records report services.

MVR Online [Nationwide Motor Vehicle Records](#) by state. Access Illinois Driving Records [here](#).

Federal Volunteer Protection Act and Related Articles

The [Volunteer Protection Act](#) was signed into law by President Bill Clinton, June 18, 1997.⁵ This Act is an additional protection but doesn't totally absolve responsibility and accountability. In other words, the Act does not eliminate the liability of the organization for its volunteers' actions; therefore, organizations should still retain legal counsel, maintain insurance, review protections annually, and screen volunteers to minimize risk.

The following articles provide information about the Volunteer Protection Act.

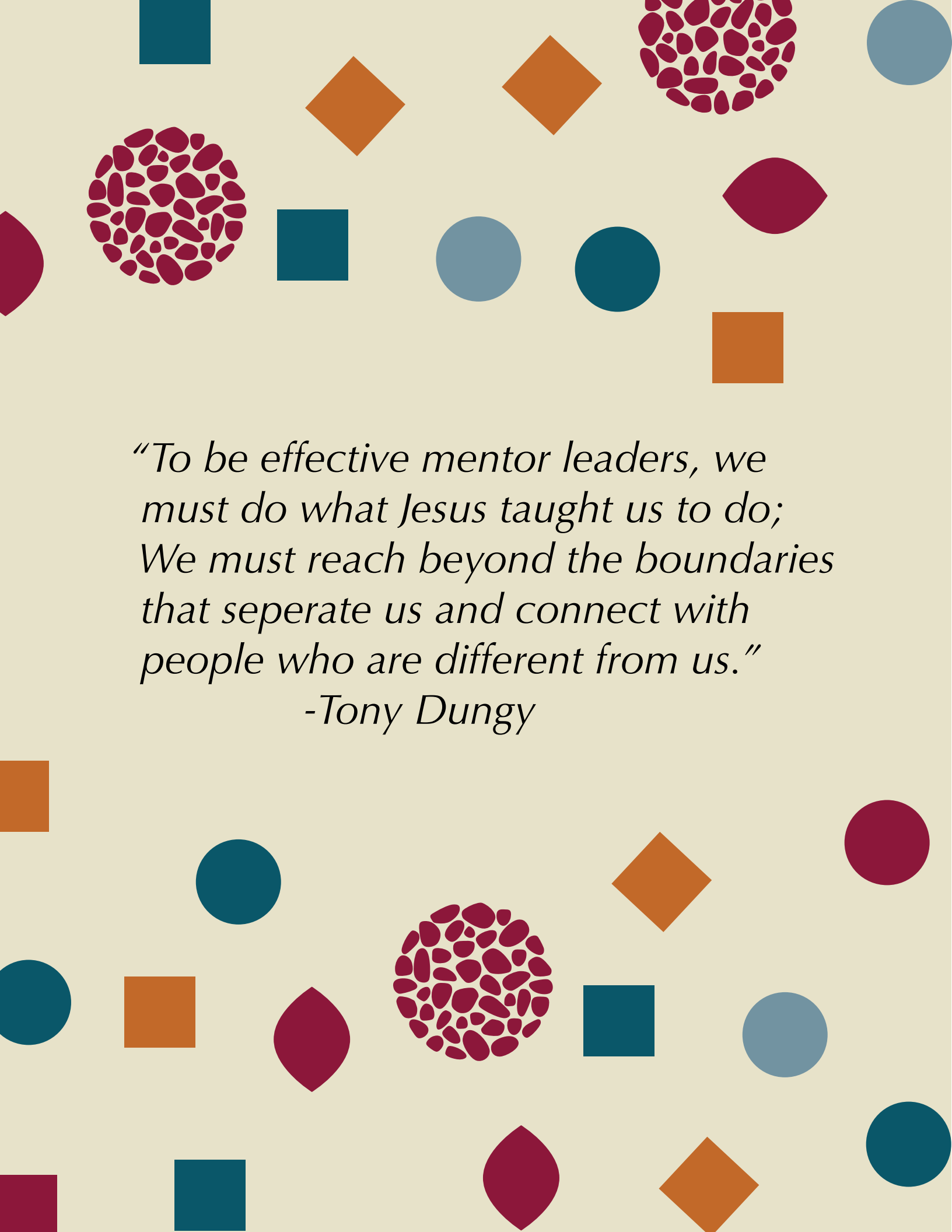
[Volunteer Protection Laws vs. Directors & Officers Liability](#) (2025)

[The Volunteer Protection Act](#) of 1997 by Philip Bartels (2000)

[Federal Law Protects Nonprofit Volunteers](#) by Don Kramer. Nonprofit Issues. This article gives summary detail about the protections the law provides for volunteers in nonprofit organizations. Note the attribution instruction at the end of the article.

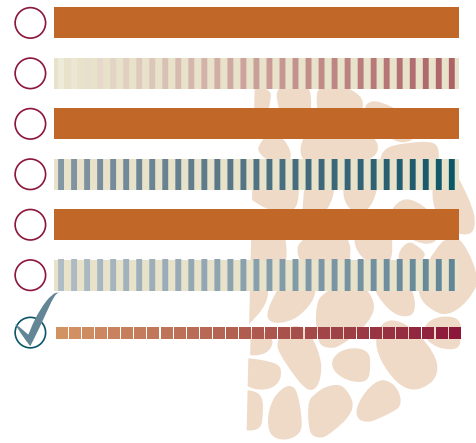
[Volunteer Liability](#). Provides information state by state in relation to the Federal Protection Act.

⁵ See also [42 U.S. Code § 14501 - Findings and purpose](#)



*"To be effective mentor leaders, we
must do what Jesus taught us to do;
We must reach beyond the boundaries
that seperate us and connect with
people who are different from us."*

-Tony Dungy



Additional Resources

After you have gathered what is helpful to you from the Handbook, you might scan the following for additional resources of interest.

Articles and Papers

Dearborn, John. [The 6 Habits of Highly Effective Mentors](#). *HuffPost*, April 28, 2013

[Finding Free Mentoring Programs for Youth Near Me](#) by Apex for Youth.

[How to Launch a Mentorship Environment in Your Church](#). Lifeway Women. April 2025

[Implementing Mentorship Programs for Emerging Leaders in Churches: Strategies for Growth and Empowerment](#). “Discipleship includes identifying, training, and empowering young leaders to foster a culture of growth within the church community.” *Tithe-y*. December 2024

[You’re Not Alone by Alonesy](#). “Introducing the First-Ever Free Virtual Mentoring Program for Teens. Whether you need ongoing support or just someone to vent to, Alonesy is here to help!”

[Mentorship and Coaching in Christian Leadership](#). *Christian Tech Jobs*. August 2024.

WORKSHEETS AND ACTIVITIES

eBooks

[Mentoring to Develop Disciples and Leaders](#) by John Mallison. Australian Church Resources.

MentorInk has released an updated (2024) report which offers a useful overview of benefits and critical issues in mentoring youth. You can access the report, “Youth Mentoring and Its Benefits for Both Young People and Mentors” [here](#).

Mentor has released the 5th edition of *Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring: A Guide for Program Development and Improvement* (2025). This downloadable eBook details the “many

considerations that go into designing and delivering meaningful programmatic mentoring experiences for young people, and specific practices we believe will make mentoring programs more effective, enjoyable, and sustainable now and in the future.” The authors affirm that the guidance offered in the eBook “builds on decades of programming and research, and the efforts of millions of program staff, mentors, young people, and their families and communities” (2025, 5). Sign in to download the eBook [here](#).

Herrera, Carla and Michael Garringer (eds). *Becoming a Better Mentor: Strategies to be There for Young People*. Mentor. January 2022. The eBook deals with such information as “the mindsets and attitudes that lay the foundation for a strong mentoring relationship; basic information about youth development and the typical relationship cycle you might experience while mentoring; and critical skills and competencies you may need to grow and refine so you can meet the needs of the young people in your life. Sign in to download the eBook [here](#).

Cómo construir un programa de mentoría exitoso, Utilizando los Elementos de la práctica efectiva. Elements of Effective Practices for Mentoring available in Spanish Mentor/National Mentoring Partnership (2005)

Videos

[5 Questions You Should Never Ask Your Mentor](#) (focused on young adults seeking mentorship direction in business) (6:45 minutes)

[Be a Mr. Jensen](#) (3:12 minutes)

[How Mentoring Can Reshape Our Communities](#) (8:14 minutes)

[Mentoring Changes Lives. Save Our Youth](#) (4:42 minutes)

[Mentorship Will Change the World](#) (19:00 minutes)

[The Power of Mentoring](#) (4:58 minutes)

[How Great Mentor Relationships Are Formed](#) (1:24 minutes)

Books

There are so *many*. Here is a sample.

Campbell, Regi. *Mentor Like Jesus: His Radical Approach to Building the Church*. RM Press, 2016
You might also explore the [Radical Mentoring](#) (RM) website

Cox, Robin. *52 Mentor Musings: To Encourage Anyone Motivating Youth*. Resources Publications, 2025

Cox, Robin. *MENTOR: Strategies to Inspire Young People: Support for Mentors, Educators, Parents, Youth Workers, and Coaches*. Resource Publications, 2024

Garza, Zachary. *You Can Mentor: How to Impact Your Community, Fulfill the Great Commission, and*

Break Generational Curses. Tall Pine Books, 2021.

Garza, Zachary and John Barnard. *The Youth Mentoring Playbook, Volume 1: A 30-Day Guide to Invest in the Next Generation*. Tall Pine Books, 2025.

Garza, Zachary and John Barnard. *The Youth Mentoring Playbook, Volume 2: A 30-Day Guide to Invest in the Next Generation*. Tall Pine Books, 2025. Additional resources are found at the [You Can Mentor](#) website and the [You Can Mentor: A Christian Youth Mentoring Podcast](#)

Hart, E. Wayne. [Seven Keys to Successful Mentoring](#). Center for Creative Leadership, 2009

Hart, E. Wayne. *Seven Keys to Successful Mentoring (Spanish for Latin America)* (Spanish Edition). Center for Creative Leadership, 2018

Hassall, Ruth. *Growing Young Leaders: A Practical Guide to Mentoring Teens*. U.K.: Bible Reading Fellowship (BRF) Publishers, 2022.

Phillips-Jones, Linda. *The New Mentors and Protégés: How to Succeed with the New Mentoring Partnerships*. Coalition of Counseling Centers, 2001

Thompson, Dean K. and D. Cameron Murchison (editors). *Mentoring: Biblical, Theological, and Practical Perspectives*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2018

Rhodes, Jean. *Older and Wiser: New Ideas for Youth Mentoring in the 21st Century*. Harvard University Press, 2023.

[Top 10 Books Every Aspiring Mentor Must Read](#) by Dominic Monn. Mentor Cruise. An annotated list of recommended books.

[15 Top Mentorship Books that Will Make You a Better Mentor](#) by Sudip Biswas, Medium, 2024. An annotated list that includes the “Top 10 . . .” and more.

[14 Books To Help You Run A Successful Mentoring Program \[Plus 10 Other Resources\]](#) by Noah Edis, 2023. Annotated list in a variety of areas of mentoring.

[illegible]

