

# EQUIPPING

for intergenerational ministry

## The value of mentoring



### Seven simple steps to start mentoring

**“Mentoring is a very significant role every Christian disciple can fulfil....irrespective of age or experience. It is not restricted to ‘giants of faith’. The basic requirement is a living relationship with God and an ability to listen and respond sensitively, and to encourage. If this is true of you, you can be God’s agent in enriching another person’s life.”** John Mallison

A mentoring relationship can begin for a special purpose such as a confirmation mentor, youth leader mentor or for a new member to your congregation.

Mentoring can be a relationship that happens naturally – intentionally taking interest in a young person over time and slowly the relationship builds into something very special. It can be for a set period of time such as 8 weeks, 1 year, or for a lifetime, depending on the purpose.



Mentoring creates relationships which in turn helps create community within a congregation. It is a way of inviting people to share their lives, their stories and their faith together.

It leads to growth in faith in both younger and older people, as well as creating relationships that will enhance the life of the church. It’s one way that every congregation can be involved in youth ministry in an enriching and substantial way.

It’s really important that mentors are matched well with the young person for the relationship to be effective. It’s helpful if there is a shared interest perhaps in sport, movies, or maybe the mentor works in a field the young person is interested in.

Below are seven simple steps you could use to get started in a more formal style of mentoring.

#### 1 START WITH ONE MEETING

Sit down together, pray, discuss what the relationship might look like and what each of you hopes to see happen from this. Set the boundaries, when and how often will you meet? How much time are you willing to give? Agree to pray about it, and then set a time for a call, text or meeting to follow up. No expectations beyond that.

#### 2 FOLLOW UP

At the time and in the way decided. Touch base and see how each of you is feeling.



If you both feel good about it, move forward and schedule your next meeting.

### 3 CREATE A PLAN

Some mentoring relationships are highly intentional about spending time together multiple times a week. Others only meet once a week or only once a month. You decide what works best for both of you, there's no set answer.

### 4 BE HONEST ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE OFFERING

Many people confuse mentoring with counselling or with being a best friend for life. Mentoring has small elements of counselling and friendship, but the purpose is to help someone grow in their faith and life. It's a partnership where each party is giving something.

### 5 DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO DO TOGETHER

Some mentoring relationships spend time reading and discussing a book or study. Others are focused on prayer. Service projects are also an option, or finding activities you both enjoy.

It's important to develop a plan; otherwise the relationship will devolve to you being the other person's counsellor. Do not default to "God will just lead us each time." God is leading you ahead of time.

Get a plan in place and ensure you think about your next meeting before it happens.

### 6 SET AN END DATE

How many times will you meet? We recommend 6-8 weeks at first, then renegotiating the relationship. You can always extend it longer after your last meeting, but this keeps either of you from being trapped if it turns out not to be the best long-term fit for either of you.

### 7 FOCUS ON THE BIBLE AND PRAYER

Use all of the other resources you can, but always come down to scripture and prayer in your mentee's life. The time they spend there will be the foundation for anything else you do or study.



This should be enough to get you started, and from there things will begin to happen.

It's okay to take a while.

Don't feel pressured to jump in too deeply too soon.

When we have a basic process like this that gives us plenty of room to listen to God, and plenty of outs if needed, we can reduce the anxiety and get started!

Adapted from: <http://stickyfaith.org/blog/seven-simple-steps-to-start-mentoring-a-teenager>

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