

FACILITATOR MANUAL



ACCOMPANIMENT IN MENTORSHIP

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INTRODUCTION

Mentorship is the process of coming alongside another person or persons in order to help them develop in their knowledge and understanding of a particular discipline or area of content; to develop competencies in the gifts, graces, and skills needed to be effective in that discipline; to develop in character and integrity as a strong example of that which they are pursuing (e.g. a Christlike servant-leadership); and to know their context well enough to impact it in meaningful and transformative ways.

This implies that the “mentor” is already on such a journey, possessing knowledge and understanding of the disciplines/content; has developed and continues to develop those gifts, graces and skills that he or she will share with their “mentee(s)”; has a Christlike spirit, patience to work with others, and commitment to the long-term development of others; and is insightful, a lifelong learner, and a student of the culture or context he or she is seeking to impact through mentorship for the sake of future generations.

Mentorship is not a one-way engagement. If elder “mentors” knew and fully understood their context and the influences, drives, and interests of the next generations, it would be assumed that they would connect and relate in relevant ways across generational lines. However, many do not understand the next generation(s), but assume they can persuade the next generation(s) to live out their lives of influence in whatever ways the elder generation has done.

In order to be a relevant and masterful “mentor” there must be honest self-awareness in regards to what one does not know or understand about the next generation(s), and to live confessionally together across generational lines, seeking the input and insights of the “mentee” regarding what is and will be needed to live effective lives in their generation. In education, we say that every teacher must first be a learner, and every learner can be a teacher. This is true in the mentoring relationship. Mentoring is in many ways





modeling, not for exact replication, but for effective, relevant, and transformative next-generation application of the core principles (biblical, theological, philosophical) of a Christlike life that can take “mentees” of the generation following, into an unknown, but hopeful future.

Dialogue is imperative to successful mentoring relationships. Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educationalist, argued that “anti-dialogue” is A over B issuing communiques (orders and instructions), while real “dialogue” is A with B communicating honestly in reciprocal ways.

NOTE: in the case of mentorship, “A” would be the mentor, and “B” would be the mentee. Nothing much is going to happen through communicate, only through genuine communication, authentic dialogue, where both parties help one another understand and grow.

Role Play: this can be a good role-play exercise, where one person acts as a mentor and another acts as a mentee. Try issuing “communiques” (orders, rules, instructions in a condescending manner) and see how everyone reacts. Try “real communication or dialogue,” where both parties speak with respect and negotiate understanding that helps each to grow in their role in the relationship. Which works best? The answer will be clear and self-evident. As an illustration, picture Christ with His disciples on the Road to Emmaus on Resurrection morning...they are walking the road together, side by side, and understanding and transformation comes through the dialogue and fellowship they share, and the recognition of their shared reality over the years coming into focus at the “breaking of the bread.” (Luke 24:13-35)



CONNECT

In order to understand the idea of “accompaniment in mentorship” we must first understand the imperative of living a “confessional life.” There is no true life of holiness without “confession.” As my grandparents used to say, “Keep short accounts with God and men...for without a willing spirit of confession, holiness is blocked from view, or proven untrue to others.” So, to be a mentor, we must be willing to acknowledge our own flaws and brokenness, accept Christ’s forgiveness, healing, and empowerment to live confessionally before him and others.

One of the greatest challenges to many in ministry is that they feel they must put on a cloak of righteousness that doesn’t actually fit them. As the rabbis of old would say: “It is difficult to wear righteousness!” By “righteousness” we mean right relationship with God, right relationship with others, right relationship, even with the created order, and right relationship with ourselves.” That is the restoration of the Imago Dei (the Image of God) in us.

(Question for small group or individual consideration: What do you think it means to “live a confessional life, and be in right relationship with God, others, creation, and yourself? Is it even possible to mentor someone who believes they are flawed and broken, if we who do the mentoring are not willing to confess to our own flaws and brokenness, which God, by His grace has forgiven, healed, and now empowers us to live holy lives, to serve as He served, to love as He loved, and to sacrifice ourselves for others as He did?)

CONTENT

Mentoring involves covenantal reciprocity of respect, honor, humility, and sacrificial investment of time, energy, knowledge, and insight. It is an investment of one life into another (or multiple others), not forced or imposed, not based upon a sense of superiority or “having arrived at the ideal” yet; but freely given to hand over (not pass down) the reins of



leadership to those who need to practice leadership in order to become competent in it.

Mentoring is a human interchange, lived out in covenantal relationship and respect. Typically, mentors and mentees maintain long-term relationships that can last a lifetime, and therefore need to be built upon a principle of “accompaniment”—a side-by-side relationship that can endure. Those who experience a meaningful mentoring relationship often become mentors to the next generation.

It is, or can be, an ongoing cycle of covenantal living and learning that breathes sustainability into the church and lives of Christ’s disciples, generation after generation.

WHAT MENTORING IS NOT

Mentoring is not discipleship. Discipleship is something all Christians participate in, as middle persons, who have been, or are being discipled by a more mature Christian, but who are, or should be discipling others towards Christlikeness. Mentoring is not coaching. Coaching is a trained approach to help others learn how to ask the right questions in order to reach the right answers. It may become a component of mentorship, but the two should not be confused.

ACTIVITY-PERSONAL

On a piece of paper, write down the name of the person who has had the most influence on your spiritual life. Next, write down the traits of that person that drew you to them, and how those traits were lived out in your shared experience. Next, create a list of traits that you believe help to make an “ideal mentor.” (Take five minutes for this writing exercise...no more.)



ACTIVITY-SMALL GROUP

If you are able to meet in a small group, either in person or online, draw on a large piece of poster paper the “ideal mentor” using symbols that represent those traits you have listed (Example: “a good listener”-draw big ears on the head of the “ideal mentor” you are creating on paper, etc.). (Take 30 minutes for this exercise.)

NOTE: if meeting together in person as a small group, draw on the same poster—all contributing; if meeting online by Zoom or other means where you can see and hear what others are saying, draw on a poster in the privacy of your own space—all participating in sharing the traits they have seen and experience.

It is likely that those participating in this initiative have experienced discipleship and/or coaching to help them learn and grow in their faith and practice. However, let’s look at an example of what true mentorship is.

A Rabbinic illustration [This may be used as a resource for those who teach these principles in their own context...if they can enact this with a child, it is a powerful illustration!]

- The first day of school (Synagogue) in Intertestamental and New Testament times.
- The young boy, comes nervously to encounter his rabbi (teacher) for the first time...
- On seeing the young boy approach, the rabbi would kneel before him as he drew near to the doorway of the school, so that they were looking each other in the eye. Reaching out with both hands, and taking the boy by the shoulders, the rabbi would say to him: “I covenant to teach you by living.” He would then bless the child by placing his hand on the boy’s head and praying for him; he would then embrace the boy, drawing him close—heart to heart, pausing long enough for each to feel the other’s heartbeat; and then, with a gentle nudge, would welcome him, over the threshold into a ‘life of learning’.



UNDERSTANDING THE ILLUSTRATION

[Also, a resource for teaching this principle...]

There is a sense in which such an encounter and ongoing relationship involves “mystery.” Maria Harris, in her book, *Teaching and Religious Imagination*, defines mystery in this way: “Mystery is not that about which we cannot know anything, but that about which we cannot know everything.” (Harris, Maria (1991). *Teaching and Religious Imagination*, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, p.13.

ENCOUNTERING MYSTERY

[Also, as a resource for teaching this principle...]

- The rabbi kneels...honoring the one he does not fully know.
- Eye to eye...deep honesty between two pilgrims.
- “I covenant to teach you by living” ...personal investment for the sake of another.
- The rabbi blesses and prays...becomes a middle figure in life.
- The rabbi embraces...acceptance of another without guarantees of results.
- The rabbi welcomes and encourages...lifelong engagement in a process bigger than either the rabbi or his student.

Now, imagine Jesus, the child, going to his first day of synagogue. Imagine the old rabbi who kneels before him and looks at his Creator eye to eye, not really knowing into whose eyes he is gazing. Then, imagine that old rabbi making a covenantal statement that he will live in such a way as teach the faith, and the life of generations gone before in the faith. Imagine that embrace when the old rabbi and the young Jesus feel one another's heartbeat. To feel the heartbeat of God would make one's own heart race, not yet quite understanding the full implications of the responsibility he (the rabbi) is taking on.



This illustration is an excellent image of what mentoring is all about—a covenantal relationship that does not, and cannot fully understand all of the implications, but is willing to kneel before the unknown potential that will be wrapped up in this covenantal relationship. Imagine how different your learning life might have been if it had started in this way.

Robert Mulholland, defines spiritual formation in this way: “Spiritual formation is a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others.” (Mulholland, M. Robert Jr. (1993). Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map to Spiritual Formation. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, p.12) This worthy definition introduces a dynamic component to spiritual formation: “for the sake of others.”

Our spiritual formation is not only about us, but also about others who come under our influence as holy persons, being conformed to Christ’s image.

(Question for small group or individual consideration: What do you think it means to “be conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others” and how do you believe you can practice this holy engagement of mentorship with this goal in mind?)

A SCRIPTURAL INSIGHT FOR MENTORING

A good passage to understand Jesus’ teachings on mentoring has to do with his declaration to his disciples of one whom he is sending to “help” when they feel lost and uncertain: John 16:5-16 (The Role of the Holy Spirit as Guide). Read this passage and follow along with these insights. A mentor has a Spirit-filled responsibility to do for others what is mapped out in this passage.

The Spirit was coming into the world, and into the community of the disciple band to:



I. 'Convict' the world (v. 8): a legal term indicating evidence enough to charge.

- Sin (failure to believe in Jesus) (v.9)
- Righteousness (only the righteous can stand before God, Is there anything that could separate?) (v.10)
- Judgment (the lie and 'liar' have been judged) (v.11)

II. 'Guide' into all truth (v. 13): which can be understood in picture form (three pictures of a "Guide")...I hope:

- a. Tour Guide: pointing out wonders not seen by the untrained eye.
- b. Teacher: who brings the student to an awakening of knowledge and a thirst for more; who knows his/her subject matter so well, they want others to come to know it, too.
- c. Tutor: one who is 'hand-on-shoulder-close', who comes to the aid of those who ask, and gently draws them in to understanding.

III. 'Glorify Christ' (v. 14): by confirming the full redemption of Christ in our lives, and opening our eyes to all that Christ did, and our ears to all He said.



CONSOLIDATE

As mentors, we share in these roles:

I. We should be a “convicting presence,” not because we are superior or perfect, but because we understand through experience how our flawed, damaged lives can be made whole again through belief, righteous (in right relationship) lives, and assurance that Jesus is the answer to all the falsehoods perpetrated by the “ruler of this world;”

II. We are to be “guides:” [our guides] who point out the wonders of Christ, because we have witnessed (can discern what is often hidden from view) through vibrant faith; [teachers] who know our subject (Christ) so well that we want others to know and understand him, too; and [tutors] who are willing to come alongside and stand “hand-on-shoulder” close to those who are having difficulty understanding all that Christ is calling us to be and do in our generation.

III. We are to “glorify Christ” by calling upon His Word and life and teach and live in covenant with those we seek to mentor. We are channels of His presence in those young lives, and all glory goes to Him.



CHANGE

So, what have we learned that can help us mentor next generations for ministry and mission? Honest change is required in our lives in at least some of the following ways:

- We must honestly know ourselves and live a confessional holiness and righteousness in the world, keeping us “real” and “accessible” to those seeking help.

Find others you trust to be honest about your self-awareness.
- We must understand our role as persons who come alongside, “hand-on-shoulder close” and know what we are talking about, “guiding into truth” (passing on the richness of the faith in relevant ways for next generations).

Truth applies cross-generationally!

- We must remember that our own spiritual formation is not just about us, but “for the sake of others.” This keeps us honest, vulnerable, and available to those we mentor.

Do others really matter to you and your spiritual development?



- We must know our own limits, maintain a “Spirit-like” understanding of Who we represent in the process, and live lives of integrity before others (our mentees), glorifying Christ by keeping Him at the center of the relationship we have with our mentees, and asking God to safeguard both mentor and mentee in all moral, ethical, and relational connections.

Constantly live in the presence of Christ, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to be true to your calling.

- We must live “covenantally” with both mentor and mentee understanding the imperative of covenantal living and learning, which implies reciprocation and commitment for the sake of others, even generations yet unborn, who will benefit from our participation in a process of mentorship in this, our generation, and theirs in the next. Did you realize that we have children and young people in our churches who will pass the next century mark? What are we willing to do to extend the legacy of holiness life and influence into that next century? We have to think further ahead than simply 10-20 years to truly influence the future!

How far into the future are you willing to see yourself having holy influence?

