

Portrait of a Mentor

This paper begins with a list of traits that bring integrity and a Christian perspective to the mentoring relationship, then goes on to describe the role of the mentor. At first glance, you might feel intimidated by the description, or you might wonder if you qualify to be a mentor. If so, remember how God uses each of us, even though we all fall short of all God intends us to be. This list is meant to clarify the basic commitments and goals that make your relationship strong and effective.

Traits of a mentor

1. **Strong faith commitment to God and intention to deepen that commitment.**
When we make a commitment to Christ and are baptized, we commit ourselves to a life of continued growth. We seek to stay close to God and open to God's voice in our lives. A strong commitment to Christ opens one to experiencing more and more the great love God has for all of us.
2. **Demonstrated integrity of faith commitment.** Our faith commitment shows itself in the way we live. Consider James 2:14-17: "What good is it my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead" (NRSV).

Integrity of faith is important in walking with youth. Many adults would prefer to have youth do as they say, not as they do. But youth learn more by observing what adults do than by what they say.

3. **Active participation in Christ's community of faith.** If we are going to mentor a young person in the Christian context, then we need to be active participants in the body of Christ. Being connected with other believers gives us strength and helps us keep focused on God's will. "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5 NRSV). It is mentoring within the community of faith that gives your relationship the strength and support needed to walk with each other.

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4. **Genuine love for youth.** Loving today’s youth can be a test of one’s ability to love, yet it is a necessary trait or ingredient in a mentoring relationship. Youth can tell if you care about what they think and feel, and if you like them. If this ingredient is missing, then your experience with mentoring will be superficial and shallow.
5. **Acceptance.** Mentors should be slow to judge and react. Jesus was able to see past the rough exterior of James, John, Matthew, Peter, Judas, and the other disciples. He could see the good that was inside, regardless of their behavior. He met people where they were, and could help them gain confidence in their life walk. This too should be your goal as a mentor.
6. **Willingness to spend time with youth.** There are so many worthy things that cry out for our time. As a mentor, are you willing to give time to a new relationship? If you don’t make the relationship a priority, what message will they receive from you about the importance of mentoring?
7. **Comfort with your own identity.** A primary struggle for youth is to discover their own identity. As a mentor to someone going through this struggle, it is important for you to be comfortable with whom you are and to have a grasp of how that identity directs your life. You are still changing and growing, too, and that’s good. But within that growth, you can be settled in knowing who you are and *whose* you are as a child of God.
8. **Sense of mission.** The Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20 is part of the purpose for youth ministry—to make disciples of others. When you commit yourself to mentoring, you are becoming part of God’s work of forming disciples.

Other helpful traits or skills that you may want to develop include:

- *healthy self-esteem* (feeling good about yourself),
- *good communication skills*,
- *openness to growing from the mentoring*
- *knowledge of adolescent development—physical, mental, and spiritual.*

Roles of the mentor

The following descriptions are food for thought, not prescriptions. The first four are at the heart and soul of mentoring; otherwise, the descriptions do not appear in a particular order of importance.

1. **A mentor is a giver of unconditional love.** “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor. 13:13 *NRSV*). The greatest and most noble role of the mentor is to help youth experience the love God offers them. Adolescents are often unsure of many things, but the question of

whether or not they are loved often tops the list. Being a Christian is about being committed to Christ because God loves us. Helping youth experience this love and seeing God as a lover, not just as a ruler, is the best thing we can do as a mentor. Helping youth respond to God with love is the true Christian response. God doesn't want us in Christian service out of fear. God wants us to be expressions of God's love in the world. The following roles are centered around our call to love as God loves.

2. **A mentor listens and hears.** Youth aren't always interested in being given answers or to be told what to do or what to think. The media tells them what they need to do in order to be somebody. Many youth are in a power struggle with parents who have told them what to do for their entire lives. The last thing a youth needs is for another adult to tell them "how it is" or "what to do."

Often, youth have the answers within themselves. Sometimes all they need is someone willing to listen to them and to help them discover the answers for themselves. Through this process they can gain valuable ownership in the consequences, and also learn how to make good decisions later in life. As a mentor, your task is to help them feel heard, which means you need to listen. (See Mentoring article #2, "How and When to Listen and Talk.")

3. **A mentor is genuinely human.** A mentor's role includes sharing questions, doubts, faith struggles, worries, fears, tears, pain, hope, joy, love, and faith with youth. They need to know life continues to throw curves at us all whatever our age, yet we can live through them all and even enjoy life. We need not pretend that we are super human or especially spiritual. Being human is something we are. We need to learn healthy ways to live with our limitations, and enjoy God's grace at the same time.
4. **A mentor is a prayer partner.** "Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective" (James 5:13-16 *NRSV*). Praying for the youth you mentor has incredible power when offered in faith.
5. **A mentor helps youth reflect and learn from their experiences.** As a mentor you can help youth process their experiences. Spending enough time with them so they can share what is going on in their lives is essential. Ask them questions about the significance of certain events in their lives. Listen for lessons they've learned. Watch for how they respond in certain situations. Challenge them to think, "What would Jesus do in this situation?" Help them sift through the

information with which they are bombarded daily to discern what they can claim as their own.

6. **A mentor supports parents.** The mentor can be a tremendous support to parents. Chances are excellent the youth will choose a mentor who shares many of the same values as the parents. The mentor encourages and fosters communication between the youth and parents. Mentors support parents by reinforcing much of what parents have taught their youth.
7. **A mentor is an advocate for youth in the church.** A primary goal of youth ministry is to help youth feel and be a part of the church. As mentor, you can facilitate this in several ways:
 - a. Help your youth discern their God-given gifts and talents, and then encourage them to share those gifts with the church.
 - b. Help the church see the gifts and talents of your youth and engage the youth in those ministries.
 - c. Encourage your youth in the exercise of their gifts. Like a plant that you care for, your youth will benefit from constant nurturing to become the persons God calls them to be.
 - d. Talk positively about your youth with parents and other adults. Help adults see beyond outward behavior to the image of God dwelling within.
8. **A mentor helps youth learn responsibility.** In order for youth to develop responsibility, they need to experience it. As a mentor, your role is not to rescue your youth from the consequences of their actions or decisions. Generally, this deprives them of the learning that they gain from experience; it results in irresponsible youth and frustrated adults. When a youth's physical, emotional, or spiritual well-being is in jeopardy, however, some rescuing may be necessary. The same is true if someone else's well-being is endangered. But in most cases, not intervening can be the best way to teach responsibility.
9. **A mentor helps youth develop healthy self-esteem.** Feeling good about ourselves (who we are) helps us to better serve God (whose we are). As a mentor, practice giving good, informative feedback as youth succeed and fail. Praise and critique in themselves aren't enough. Healthy self-esteem is built when we give information with our praise and critique, telling youth specifically *what* is good about what they did, or what they can do to do better. Healthy self-esteem also comes when we no longer depend on others for how they feel about themselves, but are secure in knowing that we are valued regardless of how we perform or what others think. (See Share Sheet on Self Esteem).
10. **A mentor helps a youth discern God's image within.** "All human beings are created in God's image (Genesis 1:26-27) . . . Since God is beyond definition and there is no box big enough to hold God, every person created is a unique image of God. Mentors can help youth discover their God-given images, which are at the

core of who we are and whose we are. Having a good idea of what this image is, in turn can help youth be an expression of God's love to the world. Merely helping them understand that they are created in the image of God and asking them what that means is a step in the direction of discover. (The Sharing Sheet on Self Esteem may be helpful in nurturing this awareness.)

11. **A mentor helps in healing.** At least one in three girls and one in five boys in our society are victims of abuse—physical, sexual, and emotional. Many will be crippled by this abuse and will not be able to function. Some people will be able to hide the pain and scars and function in society without anyone ever knowing. Whether visible or invisible, healing is necessary for a healthy and whole relationship with God. In his ministry, Jesus modeled to us the importance of healing. “Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23, *NRSV*).

What if the youth you are mentoring was abused by a parent and they see God as a parent figure? How will they experience God? How do the pain and scarring affect our motivations, values, beliefs, and spiritual identity? Walking with an abused youth is painful, yet if you can help him or her move toward healing, the years ahead will yield good fruit.

12. **A mentor is a suffering servant.** Besides many rewards, a mentor relationship also involves pain and suffering. Youth won't always make good decisions. Walking with a youth through times of pain and growth can hurt. As coaches say, “No pain, no gain.” How many important things in life have you learned without some pain and suffering?
13. **A mentor challenges and encourages youth to listen and respond to Christ.** A classic picture shows Jesus knocking on a door. The door, however, has no handle on the outside, where Jesus is. The picture is meant to teach that it is up to each individual to open the door from the inside and to invite Christ in. We all feel or hear that knock because of our spiritual identity as people made in God's image. Youth are not exempt. A mentor can challenge youth to listen for the knock and encourage them to open the door of their lives to Christ. Sharing your own experience of responding to Christ's knocking can be a helpful thing for youth to hear.

To sum up

The role of the mentor can be described as a call to be the skin of Christ to a young person. Jesus physically left earth about two thousand years ago—yet we continue to experience him in many ways. One of the most powerful ways is through each other. The journey of faith is not taken alone. We need to experience it with other people or we will not truly experience God in our lives. As a mentor, you will be a key channel for the presence of Christ in the youth with whom you spend time.

Knowing How and When to Listen and Talk

Central to your mentoring relationship is the talking and listening that you do together. Over time, conversations will gather depth and trust will grow. But the rate at which that happens will vary considerably. For some mentoring pairs, conversation will be easy, for others it will be more difficult. Depending on personalities and circumstances, it will take more time and effort for some pairs to establish trust than for others.

These guidelines can help you make the most of the conversations you have with your youth. If done right, your conversations will not only be meaningful to the youth; you also will learn more about yourself. The reward is not so much in the outcome of the conversations as it is in achieving openness and trust.

Listening

Listening and hearing are important elements of mentoring. Youth have a lot of good things to say, concerns to share, ideas to test, and issues to sort out. Mentors have knowledge gained through experience, and the time to hear them out, to enable them to discover answers from within.

Listening and hearing go together

Listening is receiving the message and letting the sender know you have received it. *Hearing* is understanding—or at least caring—about what is said. *Listening* recognizes the facts being communicated, while *hearing* recognizes the feelings woven into the conversation. If we are going to help youth understand themselves and feel heard, we need to listen to the facts as well as hear the feelings coming across.

A good listener . . .

- **Makes eye contact.** To make eye contact with the speaker sends the strong message that you are interested in what the speaker has to say.

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- **Uses body language that shows interest.** Positioning your body in an upright position, or leaning forward, communicates interest in what the speaker is saying.
- **Responds with words.** Verbally acknowledging what a person says helps them feel heard.

Tips for effective listening

1. **Paraphrase.** To help you hear, summarize what a person has said by repeating it back to them in your own words. If you don't get it right, the person will usually elaborate or correct to help you understand.

Paraphrasing also helps the speaker. When youth are trying to sort out their feelings and thoughts on issues, having you rephrase what was said can help them think through the issues and sort out their feelings.

2. **Remove distractions.** Turn off the radio and TV. Remove yourself from settings where interruptions might be likely to occur.
3. **Empathize.** If you have been in a similar situation, share that with the other person.
4. **Schedule time.** If you are busy and can't quit what you are doing, set a time when you can devote your attention to listening.
5. **Stay neutral.** Avoid taking sides or making judgments as you listen.
6. **Concentrate.** Keep focused on the conversation. Don't let your thoughts drift to other problems while someone is talking with you.
7. **Let them finish.** Don't anticipate what someone is going to say. Especially avoid finishing the sentence for them.
8. **Practice listening skills by doing the exercise.** This exercise affirms the importance of being an active listener.

Talking

As I grew up, a lot of adults who talked with (or at) me would begin by saying, "When I was your age. . . ." That phrase was a major turnoff because there was usually a sermon attached to it. I promised myself I would never use it. Then one fateful day when I was about twenty-five, I was listening to some youth at the Boys' and Girls' Club where I worked. Out of my mouth came those five forbidden words. I knew right away I needed to work at my talking skills.

Youth respond much more positively when we share our experiences than when we preach to them about what they should or shouldn't do. They will also have greater ownership in dealing with problems if they come up with the answers and choices for themselves.

When do you talk?

The simple answer is: When the youth is through talking. If you like to talk, you need to resist that urge and to wait instead. Listen for the right time to share. Then, you can share your own experience or you can ask questions.

A few simple guidelines

1. **Use statements to start the conversation.** Begin with a statement like "Tell me about your day" or "Tell me more about. . . ." By using these kinds of statements you allow teens to introduce the agenda, to talk about the things most prominent on their minds.
2. **Ask open-ended questions.** Questions that can be answered by *yes* or *no* are often dead ends. Questions beginning with *how*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *who* help draw out information that might fill out the story being told. Questions like "How do you feel about this?" "Why do you think this happened?" or "What do you think about that?" usually require a thought-full response from the person talking.
3. **Share your experiences and feelings.** This often can help youth examine and answer their questions. When you share your story, begin with statements that invite the youth into the experience with you: "I had a similar experience once."

Be sure to share the feelings you experienced as well as the facts. This not only helps the youth to see you as genuine, it helps them reflect on their own feelings. Often, when a teen experiences your willingness to be vulnerable, they will have more trust in you and share more deeply.

Cautions and other rules of engagement

1. **Refrain from judgments.** Sometimes youth will make statements they know will upset you. This can be a way of testing you or trying to get a grasp on what you really think, feel, or believe. Avoid making judgmental comments.
2. **Make sure the setting suits the conversation.** Talking about risky and emotional things in a public place can squelch the conversation. When you meet with a youth, try different settings that will make conversation easy.

3. **Let the youth know that what is shared will be kept in confidence.** Say this even if the youth doesn't ask; it will help build trust. Then honor your commitment. The only time to "break" this commitment is when your friend reveals that she or he is experiencing sexual abuse or physical harm, or when she or he is suicidal; then you are legally required to report the problem to the authorities. In this case, let your friend know that you are obligated to report it.
4. **Keep within the youth's comfort zones.** If the youth is feeling uncomfortable with your subject, don't push it. Allow the youth to share only what he or she is willing to risk sharing. As trust is built, the teen will open up more and more.
5. **Reinforce evidence of good decisions.** Work hard at praising the positive choices the youth makes. Don't preach or scold them when they make poor choices. Help them process their disappointments, but don't dwell on them.
6. **Use appropriate touch.** Touch can be a good listening tool if used properly. But it can also be misinterpreted. Use it sparingly, especially if you are starting a new relationship, and in ways that are comfortable for the youth. A squeeze of the arm, a pat on the back, a hug after a risky conversation can help the youth feel okay about what was shared. Asking permission to give a hug is appropriate. (Note that these tips assume that mentoring pairs are always same-gender. Potential for misunderstanding and inappropriate touch multiplies when a relationship is cross-gender.)
7. **Be open to silence in conversation.** Some people need to think through things before they feel comfortable speaking. Enjoy times of silence; you don't always need to fill silence with words.
8. **Take care in how much of yourself you share.** Some things you share about your own experiences can be more information than a youth can handle. Only share what you feel they are capable of integrating into their experiences.
9. **Be honest.** Don't be the "devil's advocate." There is no place in the church to take on an identity or take a position contrary to what you believe. It may be appropriate to raise questions about issues, but to mislead someone into thinking you believe something you don't is inappropriate.

Listening exercise

As a way of practicing the listening skills mentioned above, do this exercise with another mentor or a different adult:

1. Choose which of you will be Person A and which will be Person B.

2. Person A talks to Person B for two to three minutes about something from the past or from current experience. Person B works at using the three listening components—good eye contact, positive body language, and verbal response. Afterward, Person A shares whether or not she or he felt listened to, and why or why not.
3. Switch roles. This time the listener (Person A) may not give any verbal response while Person B shares an experience from the present or past. Have Person B share whether or not he or she felt listened to, and why or why not.
4. Now have Person B once again share something with Person A. Person B should keep his or her eyes shut; Person A should work to help Person B feel listened to. Have Person B share whether she or he felt listened to, and why or why not.
5. Next, Person A shuts his or her eyes and talks to Person B. Person B cannot speak or touch Person A. After a couple of minutes have Person A share whether or not she or he felt listened to, and why or why not.
6. Conclude the exercise by sharing thoughts, feelings, and insights on these three listening components.

Nuts and Bolts of Mentoring

Beginning and maintaining a mentoring relationship cannot happen by following a set formula. But there are a few pointers that might be helpful. Let me begin by telling the story of Brian's and my friendship.

I knew Brian for about four years prior to our formal mentoring relationship. We would often talk together after church. We also had some contact when our families got together. Otherwise, we knew very little about each other.

Our first formal meeting was at Brian's house with his parents present. I shared with Brian and his parents my hope for our mentoring relationship. I wanted to be Brian's friend, a person from our church in whom he could confide anything. My role was to help Brian better understand himself, his relationship with God, and what that relationship meant in his life.

I also explained that I was not a replacement for Brian's parents; in fact, I would aid Brian in his relationship with his parents. I told Brian—in front of his parents—that I would keep everything he told me in confidence. I also told him that I would encourage him to share with his parents the things he shared with me. I explained that I would not rescue him from poor decisions he might make, but that I would walk with him through the tough and the good times.

I qualified the confidentiality statement by saying there was one circumstance under which I would break his confidence. And that would be if I felt that Brian was suicidal or self-destructive in his behavior. I encouraged Brian's parents to encourage Brian to share freely about our activities, and that if at any time they had questions or concerns about our relationship, to give me a call.

Why did I start my mentoring relationship with Brian in this manner? Because I wanted Brian and his parents to be on equal footing. By telling Brian these things with his parents present, he knew that he could not play me against his parents. His parents also knew some of what to expect from me as a person who could in the future be very close to their son. This initial meeting got us started in a good direction.

At the time I was not aware of such things as any mentoring covenant forms or other resources offered in this series, but they might have been helpful.

Major tasks in setting up a mentoring relationship.

Become acquainted with each other. You may or may not already know each other well. Many of your activities together the first year should allow you to become better acquainted with each other. See the online resource “Mentoring: Topics and Activities” for a multitude of ideas.

Build trust. At times during the initial year, you will be tempted to become impatient; your friend may not seem to open up and talk much. But it takes a while for them to get to trust you. Sharing of themselves is risky for people twelve to fourteen years old. Besides time, building trust also involves taking risks with each other, usually beginning with you the mentor.

You can help build trust by sharing personally of yourself and your thoughts, and by taking the lead when conversation may be risky. Avoid making judgmental comments or doing activities that the youth does not feel comfortable doing. Be sensitive to the youth and to their desires for your times together.

Another part of trust is keeping confidence. As noted earlier, the sharing you do with each other should be kept confidential. Encourage the youth to share with the appropriate people, especially parents, things you feel should be shared. Also let them know that you need to break confidentiality if the youth is acting in a self-destructive matter (especially if they are suicidal) or in physical danger from others, including danger of sexual abuse.

Establish a common understanding of your relationship. Again, it is important that you have a vision for mentoring and that you share this with the youth up front. Talk about your hopes for the relationship, how often you will meet, how long you hope to continue the relationship.

Set up a time to meet. Offer several different times that work for you. Youth can be incredibly busy, so be prepared to be flexible. Allow yourself enough time so your time together won’t be rushed. Quantity of time is important if “quality time” is to occur.

Choose your activity. Once you have agreed on a time, you need to agree on what to do. At the beginning, choose an activity that puts your friend at ease and allows you plenty of opportunity to get to know each other. Give the youth opportunity to suggest what they would like to do with you. This obviously might influence when you meet.

Choose a location. The place you meet should be comfortable to the youth and conducive to what you plan to do. Give the youth opportunity to suggest a place, or suggest several options and let the youth choose.

Involve parents. It is essential that you involve parents in your mentoring relationship. At times, parents may feel threatened by your relationship with their child. Being up front with them about your relationship will help them build trust in you.

For many families, the often turbulent years of adolescence can bring great challenges; you can be an important support to both parents and youth through these times. If the youth isn't communicating well with his or her parents, you can help them communicate better with each other by encouraging conversation or even by being a mediator between the parents and youth.

Parents can be a good source of information as you get to know the youth. They can offer perspectives on the issues the youth is wrestling with, or on their priorities. Parents can also provide you with issues they feel the youth needs to discuss.

Some ways to involve parents:

- Have them and your friend over for a meal. (Tip: involve the youth in the cooking.) If you don't include the youth, he or she might suspect you are talking behind his or her back. Assess whether or not this will be a problem if you meet the parents without the youth.
- Talk with them periodically, either face to face or over the phone.
- Share with the parents the positive traits and gifts you see in their youth.

Discuss a topic. Again, for ideas, consult the list of activities and topics also included in this online series and/or use one of the "Share Sheets." The following steps can be useful in discussing an issue:

1. Share with each other your current thoughts, practices, and feelings about the topic. Use your good listening skills to enable the youth to feel comfortable sharing on a personal level. It can also be helpful if you begin by sharing your own thoughts and feelings to model for the youth how they might share.
2. Share personal motivations, beliefs and hopes. Why do you do what you do? Why do you believe what you believe? Begin with your earliest memories of the issue and the feelings associated with those memories. Continue to relate your experiences and feelings in chronological order, if possible. This step is critical to understanding where the other is coming from.
3. Explore God's story and vision. What does God have to say about it? What biblical passages speak to it? What have been the experiences of the world's Christian communities through the years? This step opens the door to further growth, decisions, and further questions.
4. Ask what God's story has to do with our story. Does it affirm and encourage us, or does it ask us to change?

5. Talk about how to live out the vision. Change in your youth may begin with your own modeling in living out a kingdom vision. You may wish to covenant together your faith action in regard to the topic.

Share your faith journeys

Youth are usually very open and appreciative of adults who share their faith journey openly and honestly. At some point in your relationship, share with each other where you have come from and where you are at in your faith journeys. To prepare for this, spend some time reflecting from your faith experiences and relating chronologically to each other those experiences.

Sharing a faith story is easier for some than for others, so be patient with yourselves. To get you started, consider taking turns answering some or all of these questions:

- What is your earliest memory of church or Sunday school?
- What is a memorable experience of church or Sunday school?
- What is a painful memory of church or Sunday school?
- How was your family involved with church?
- Where and how often did you attend when you were smaller/growing up?
- What are some of the things you learned about God?
- [If your youth has made a public declaration of faith.] How did you first decide to believe in Jesus? How has your faith developed since then?
- How have you experienced God in your life?
- How have the church, your family, friends, society and world events, shaped your faith?
- Which people have had a great impact on your faith development?
- Share one event that has had an impact on your faith.

Here are some suggestions to help you get the most out of your sharing:

1. Share honestly your *feelings* attached to the experiences.
2. Use visual aids such as photographs, objects, articles of clothing, etc., to help tell your story.
3. If possible, visit the actual locations where certain experiences took place.
4. Make sure that neither of you feels forced to share more than you are prepared to share.
5. If your journey is a long one, select the segment(s) that would be meaningful to the other. You could share more at a different time.
6. Pause once in a while to allow for questions of clarification or for further probing into an experience.

7. Affirm one another's journey. We don't all have dramatic stories to tell. Each journey is unique and worth celebrating.

Understand the youth you mentor

Read up on teenage culture and psychology. There are many books and articles on the market.

How much time does mentoring take?

It all depends on several factors. Ask yourself:

- *How well do you know the youth?*
- *How structured is your mentoring program?*
- *How much time do the youth's parents expect you to spend in the mentoring relationship?*
- *How much time do you have to commit?*

For successful mentoring, however, you need to meet with the youth at least once a month for a significant amount of time (i.e. morning, afternoon or evening). In addition to this face-to-face contact once a month, shorter contact once a week, either by phone, letter, after church, or a quick snack, can help you keep in touch with each other. Once a year it may be appropriate to spend an entire day together, possibly including overnight.

Evaluating your relationship

Evaluation is a necessary tool if you are to keep growing in your faith and life. Similarly, if you are to serve God and a youth through mentoring, you should reflect periodically on what you have been doing and learn from the experience.

Ending the relationship

Sometimes it may be necessary to change mentors. There are times when the adult has other commitments and cannot meet on a regular basis with the youth. Maybe the two personalities just do not mesh. Or sometimes the adult moves away and it is no longer possible to be a mentor. Or a mentor might find he or she needs to deal with personal agenda before continuing to walk with a youth. All of these reasons are valid ones for finding a new adult to mentor a youth.

Ending can be quite painful for both parties. But part of an honest, open relationship is being able to recognize when it is time to move on. The needs of the youth should be the main factor.

When a relationship ends, it should not be seen as a failure. The successes and good times should be celebrated, possibly through a final meeting of some kind.

Use the following to help you get to know one another as you set up your mentoring relationship. Each of you should fill out a copy and give it to the other for reference. Review them together in one of your first meetings.

Name: _____ Phone: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State/Province: _____
Zip/Postal Code: _____ Birthday: _____
School: _____ Year in school: _____

Hobbies, sports, and interests:

My school and/or community activities:

My church activities:

New hobbies, sports or activities I would like to try:

I am (roles I play):

____ sister	____ brother	____ baby-sitter	____ errand person
____ daughter	____ son	____ parent	____ housekeeper
____ aunt	____ uncle	____ breadwinner	____ other _____

Position in family: (for example, second of five children) _____

When I think of family, I feel _____

Things I like and don't like about myself:

I think I am . . .

	Often	Sometimes	Hardly ever
Friendly	_____	_____	_____
Pessimistic	_____	_____	_____
Helpful	_____	_____	_____
Critical	_____	_____	_____
Strong	_____	_____	_____
Witty	_____	_____	_____
Unfriendly	_____	_____	_____
Good humored	_____	_____	_____
Uptight	_____	_____	_____
Easygoing	_____	_____	_____
Weak	_____	_____	_____
Positive	_____	_____	_____
Sensitive	_____	_____	_____
Optimistic	_____	_____	_____
Shy	_____	_____	_____
Organized	_____	_____	_____
Bad tempered	_____	_____	_____
Negative	_____	_____	_____
Energetic	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____

What I think others think of me: _____

I like being the age I am because: _____

Sometimes I dislike being my age because: _____

Adapted by Anna Rehan from *Teens and Sexuality* by Hilda Enns, Sue Goerzen, and Lois Paff Bergen (Faith and Life Press, 1984).

Mentoring

Topics for Activities You Can Do Together

Get-to-know-you Conversation Starters

1. When I have some free time I like to . . .
2. My favorite time of year is . . .
3. When it rains I . . .
4. At Christmastime I . . .
5. Some things I enjoy doing with friends are . . .
6. Being rich means . . .
7. When I'm with my family I . . .
8. A talent that I have is . . .
9. One thing I'd like to change about myself is . . .
10. The world problem that I am most concerned about is . . .
11. When people tease me I . . .
12. When I'm in a new group I . . .
13. The last book I read was . . .
14. My favorite food to cook, bake, or eat is . . .
15. If I had to give up everything but one thing that I own, the one thing I'd keep
16. My favorite music to listen to is . . .
17. I think the most difficult thing that Christ told us to do is . . .
18. I think the church is . . .
19. I get discouraged when . . .
20. My favorite recreational activity is . . .
21. One thing that bugs me about my parents is . . .
22. If I could live anywhere, I'd move to _____ because . . .
23. The person who has influenced my life the most is . . .
24. Ten years from now I would like to be . . .
25. The last time I cried was . . .
26. I am happiest when . . .

—Compiled by Anna Rehan

Adapted from Steve Ropp's book *One on One: Making the Most Out of Your Mentoring Relationship* (Faith & Life Press, 1993). Permission is granted to reproduce this sheet for one local use or one church mentoring program only.

Mentoring fun: A to Z

- Attend an amusement park
- Attend a church of a different denomination
- Attend a professional sporting event together
- Attend school functions together
- Baby-sit together
- Bake/cook
- Build a sand castle
- Camp overnight
- Carve pumpkins
- Celebrate birthdays together
- Chop wood
- Clean someone's house
- Climb a mountain
- Collect stamps
- Cook recipes from a favorite cookbook
- Create a computer program
- Critique a movie together
- Discuss a topic
- Do community service
- Do household chores
- Do a service project
- Drive somewhere you have never been
- Eat at a strange or unique place
- Experience a high ropes course
- Fly kites
- Fish
- Fix a special meal for someone
- Garden together
- Go on a backpacking trip
- Go on a bike trip
- Go boating/canoeing
- Go bowling
- Go to a concert or symphony
- Go cross-country skiing
- Go ice skating
- Go to a mall and spend \$10,000 imaginary dollars together
- Go scuba diving
- Go sledding
- Hang glide
- Hike
- Jog
- Kayak

- Make snow sculptures
- Paint a picture
- Plan your retirements
- Play board games
- Play a card game
- Play computer games
- Quilt
- Race remote-control cars
- Read a good book together
- Recycle
- Repel down a cliff
- Sail
- Sew
- Share a hobby
- Sing
- Snorkel
- Snow ski
- Study the Bible together
- Swim
- View childhood pictures
- Visit a location where a personal significant event took place
- View neighborhood graffiti
- Visit a museum together
- Wash cars
- Watch a movie
- Water ski
- Write poetry

In larger group:

- Bible quiz
- Capture the flag
- Kickball
- Pumpkin carving contest
- Scavenger hunts
- Trivia contests
- Video camera scavenger hunts
- Volleyball

Talk about life issues

The following sections include two different approaches for talking about faith and life with your youth. The first goes into greater depth, and the second is more casual and spontaneous. There is a time and place for each approach. For both, you may wish to consult the article “How and When to Listen and Talk” included in this series.

1. Share Sheets.

These are designed to guide you and your mentoring friend in talking through a topic in such a way that you move from discussing your experiences and feelings around an issue, to exploring connections between God’s Word and your own lives. Sheets on the following topics are offered by Faith & Life Resources at its mentoring site:

Alcohol Community Growing Up Life Goals Living with Parents Motivation	Peacemaking Peer Pressure Possessions Self-esteem Truth-telling Vocation
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2. Leading Questions.

There are times when you get together and you can’t think of anything you would like to ask that person. Here are some questions you and your mentoring friend can ask each other to get to know how you see the world or each other. Choose questions that fit both of your personalities, and the maturity of your friendship.

- What do you want to be doing in ten years?
- If you wrote a book today, what would the title be?
- Describe the ideal home.
- How would you define love?
- What would you do with a \$1,000,000?
- What do you like to do in your spare time?
- Give three words to describe how you feel right now.
- Describe your best friend.
- If you could live any place in the world, where would it be?
- What is something that really “bugs” you?
- In one sentence, what is life all about?
- If someone could give you anything in the world for your birthday, what would you like it to be?
- Do you ever feel lonely? When?
- What really turns you off?

- What is one quality you look for most in friends?
- How do you feel when someone laughs at you?
- What depresses you?
- If you could be a famous person, who would it be? Why?
- If you could take only three people with you on a trip around the world, whom would you take?
- Describe the best teacher you ever had.
- Share one of the happiest days of your life.
- If you could be someone in history, who would you be?
- What do you like best about yourself?
- How do you feel when you are alone?
- How would you describe yourself to someone who does not know you?
- What makes a person “popular”?
- Should guys be asked out by girls?
- Do you think people should live together before getting married? Why or why not?
- What do you think your friends say about you when you are not around?
- What makes you laugh?
- Tell me about the first person you were “in love” with.
- Tell me your favorite joke.
- Do you ever feel shy? When?
- How do you feel when someone you have asked for a date refuses?
- What do you do when someone you like has hurt your feelings?
- Tell me one thing about yourself that I don’t already know.
- Would you rather be with people who are similar to you, or different from you?
- What was one thing your family did together that you really like?
- What is one thing your parents and siblings did that you want to do differently with your own family?
- If you could change one physical aspect of yourself, what would it be? Why?
- In one sentence, what is your purpose in life?
- What difference do you hope to make in this world?
- If you had to move and could only take one thing, what would it be?
- What is the earliest memory of church?
- What event or person has had a great impact on your life?
- What style of music do you enjoy?
- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite time of day? Why?
- What is your favorite time of year? Why?
- What is your favorite song of all time?
- What is the most meaningful song from your church experience?
- What is the hardest thing you have ever had to do?
- Describe the ideal job.
- What are your views/values on use of alcohol/drugs?
- What does it mean to be male and female in North American society?

- How were you disciplined as a child?
- How did your parents show/tell you they loved you?
- What is the most important thing for a parent to teach their children?
- Should people of different cultures marry one another? Why or why not?
- Is it ever “appropriate” for one human to take another human being’s life?
- What is the craziest thing you have ever done in your life?
- If you could do something in your life over, what would it be?
- Have you ever broken a law? What were the consequences?
- What is the best book you have ever read? Why?
- Should a guy who gets a girl pregnant marry her? Why or why not?
- Under what circumstances is it okay for a woman to get an abortion? Why?
- How much of a person’s income should be given to the church? Why?
- If you could be an animal (or a fish or insect), what would it be? Why?
- Name three of your favorite movies. Why are they your favorites?
- What is your favorite time of day? Why?
- What was your favorite TV show when you were eight years old? ten? twelve?
- How many different states or provinces have you visited?
- How many different countries have you visited?
- What is the most important job a person can have? Why?
- Describe an event in your life that was life threatening.
- What is the strangest thing you have ever eaten?
- Who is the most famous person you have ever met or shaken hands with?
- Describe one of the saddest moments of your life.
- Describe one of the angriest moments of your life.
- What is the riskiest thing you have ever done?
- Describe a time that you did something you knew you should not have done.
- Why do you think you still did it?
- Describe one of the most beautiful sights you have ever seen.
- Is it OK to kiss on the first date? Why or why not?
- What is your favorite candy bar?
- What is one thing you can do to make the world a better place?
- What is one thing you have done to make the world a better place?
- Where in the world are you going? What in the world will your presence mean?
- Tell me about your worst day in school this year.
- What does it mean “to make it in the world”?
- If you had \$1,000,000 to give away, to whom would you give it?
- Do you believe everything the Bible says? Why or why not?
- What qualities should a Christian have? How do these differ from someone who is not Christian?
- What is the most vivid dream you have ever had?
- What dream have you had that you would like to come true?

Share Sheet: Alcohol

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

My Current Attitude Toward Alcohol

Check the statement(s) which best reflects your current attitude toward drinking alcohol.

- Drinking any kind of alcoholic beverage is wrong.
- It's okay to drink alcohol once in a while but not get drunk.
- It's okay to drink alcohol all you want as long as you do not get drunk.
- It's okay to get drunk once in a while as long as you don't drive.
- You should not drink until you are of legal age.
- It's okay to drink alcohol if it keeps you from taking other drugs.
- Other _____

My Past and Present Experiences with Alcohol

What have been your experiences with alcohol? (Check all that apply)

- As far as I know, I have never drunk alcohol in my life.
- I have tried alcohol once or twice.
- I use alcohol regularly (yearly, monthly, weekly, daily).
- I have gotten drunk once or twice.
- I have gotten drunk a number of times.
- I wonder if I have a drinking problem.
- I have been in jail because of my use of alcohol.
- I have alcoholic parents or relatives.
- I knew someone who died in an alcohol-related accident.
- I knew someone who died from an alcohol-related illness.

- ____ I know someone who is alcoholic.
____ I have/had a problem with drinking alcohol.
____ Other _____

Share about your very first experiences with alcohol and about the feelings you had when you drank. How have your experiences shaped your attitudes?

Some facts about alcohol in our society

- People are five times more likely to become addicted to alcohol if they start drinking as teenagers.
- Most children grow up adopting the drinking habits of their parents.
- Sixty percent of child abuse happens when the abuser is under the influence of alcohol.
- Two 747s crashing each week (killing all on board) would equal the number of alcohol-related deaths in North America.

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about alcohol.

Psalm 104:14-23

John 2:1-11

Romans 13:11-14

Romans 14:20-21

Ephesians 5:18

Summarize how you believe God feels about the use of alcohol in different settings. How do you feel God wants you to think and act when it comes to a healthy approach to alcohol? What decisions have you made, or will you make?

More Alcohol Issues to Discuss

What is a healthy attitude to people who drink too much?

- How should we respond to people who think differently than we do about alcohol?
- How do you know when someone has drunk too much?
- Is using alcohol just a personal choice or something we should decide on together as a church, or as a group of Christian friends?
- Is alcoholism a disease, a sin, or both?

Share Sheet: Community (living with others)

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Complete the following sentences:

- Community is . . .
- Christian community is . . .
- I experience community when . . .

Based on your answers, talk through the following questions

- What communities are you part of? (school, family, work, neighborhood, teams, church, etc.)
- What is the difference between your church community and your other communities?
- What feelings do you have when you experience community?
- What would life be like if you dropped one or more of your communities? (Imagine several scenarios where church, family, or school is dropped.)

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about about Christian community.

Acts 20:27-31

Romans 12:3-8

1 Corinthians 12:12-31

Colossians 1:24

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about community.

What do you believe God is saying to you about your involvement in community in general, and in Christian community in particular?

Share Sheet: Getting Older, Growing Up

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

On the scale below, indicate how you feel about growing older.

Growing older is okay, but I'd rather not.	I'm looking forward to growing older.	
----- ----- ----- -----		
If I could, I would avoid growing older.	I like the age I am right now.	I can't grow older fast enough.

What is the perfect age for you? Why do you think so?

Share your responses to the following:

- What do you look forward to about growing older?
- What concerns you about growing older?
- What scares you about growing older?

- What will you be like and how will you have changed in one year? five years? ten years? twenty years?
- Share enjoyable experiences you have had but won't be able to have again now that you are older.
- Share unpleasant experiences you are glad you won't experience again.

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about growing older.

Job 12:12

Matthew 6:28-34

2 Peter 3:18

Summarize what you believe the Bible is saying about growing older. How do you see God being involved in your life stages? What do you find encouraging? What do you find scary? How is God asking you to grow older?

Share Sheet: Life Goals

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Put an X in the column that matches your response. When you are both finished, share your responses. Talk about any questions that you thought weren't clear.

Yes	No	Sometimes	
___	___	___	1. I wish I had more friends.
___	___	___	2. I worry about the way I look.
___	___	___	3. I often feel lonely when I am with people.
___	___	___	4. I never get angry.
___	___	___	5. My feelings are easily hurt.
___	___	___	6. I become nervous when someone watches me work.
___	___	___	7. I have trouble making up my mind.
___	___	___	8. I feel I have to be the best in everything.
___	___	___	9. I like everyone I know.
___	___	___	10. Other people are happier than I.
___	___	___	11. I am always good to others.
___	___	___	12. I worry about what people will say to me.
___	___	___	13. I feel others don't like the way I do things.
___	___	___	14. I am secretly afraid of some things.
___	___	___	15. I wish I had more confidence in myself.

Sometime in my life, I want to be (please mark with an X):

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a firefighter | <input type="checkbox"/> a grown up |
| <input type="checkbox"/> happy | <input type="checkbox"/> a parent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rich | <input type="checkbox"/> employed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a corporate executive | <input type="checkbox"/> extremely successful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> an actor | <input type="checkbox"/> a professional musician |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a nurse | <input type="checkbox"/> an environmentalist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a doctor | <input type="checkbox"/> a computer programmer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> married |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a garbage collector | <input type="checkbox"/> a mountain climber |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a construction worker | <input type="checkbox"/> a social rights activist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a talk show host | <input type="checkbox"/> president |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a game show host | <input type="checkbox"/> prime minister |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heavy metal guitarist | <input type="checkbox"/> a social worker |
| <input type="checkbox"/> professional athlete | <input type="checkbox"/> influential |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a military officer | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> church leader | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a student | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a webs designer | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a rocket scientist | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a mechanic | |

Circle those which you currently are.

Talk about how you got to be what you are today.

- Who were the people who influenced you?
- What was God’s involvement in your life’s direction?
- What place does your current place in life have in what you will be?

Talk about the items you marked with an “x.”

- Why do you want to be these things?
- What is God’s involvement in your desire to be these things?
- What purpose(s) would it serve to be these things?

God’s View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say life goals and purposes.

Exodus 3:1—4:17

Matthew 28:18-20

Ephesians 2:10

Colossians 1:9-12

What do you believe God wants you to do with the life you have been given?

- How do you know what God wants you to do?
- How does God speak to you?
- How does God speak to you through other people?
- How do you, or how will you respond?

Share Sheet: Living With Parents

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

List five words that describe your parents (mentors, describe what your parents were like when you were a teenager):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Living with my parent(s) is/was (check all that applies):

- like riding on an emotional roller coaster
- really quite enjoyable
- like living with the _____ (fill in with a TV family)
- tolerable, but needs improvement
- non-existent, I make/made a point of only coming home to eat and sleep
- miserable
- all I live for
- something I'd rather not talk about
- okay
- like being caged with the dumbest people in the world
- other _____
- other _____

I live(d) at home with:

- both parents
- Mom only
- Dad only
- one parent and one step-parent
- grandparent(s)
- other _____

What things do (did) you appreciate most about your parents? What are the things which bother (bothered) you the most about your parents?

Over what issues did you have the greatest conflict? How do/did you manage that conflict? How do/did you feel when in conflict with your parents? (Use the appendix on page 3 for discussion if this is a key issue.)

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about parents and children, and the relationships between them.

- Exodus 20:12
- Ephesians 6:1-4
- Colossians 3:20-21
- John 13:34

Now read Matthew 18:15-17. What parts of this approach is especially important in dealing with conflict with parents? What parts might be a special challenge? How did Jesus treat pagans and tax collectors?

Summarize what you believe the above verses are saying about you and your parents.

What do you believe God is asking of you in regard to your relationship with your parents, specifically when you are in conflict?

APPENDIX

Some things to think about if you are in conflict with your parents

Conflict occurs on four different levels:

1. **Conflict over communication.** This occurs when you haven't communicated well with those with whom you are in relationship. For example, your parents get mad when you don't show up for supper because you forgot to tell them you had band practice.
2. **Conflict over methods** occurs when someone doesn't like the way you do something. Example: Your mom is mad at you because, even though you cleaned your room as you were asked, you did it by putting everything in garbage bags and putting them in the backyard.
3. **Conflict over goals** happens when your specific goals are contrary to someone else's goals. An example would be when you want to go to the mall to be with friends, but your parents want to pay a family visit to Aunt Mary.
4. **Conflict over values and beliefs.** This occurs because someone has different values or beliefs than you do. If you believe God doesn't mind if you step on bugs, but your parents believe it is a sin to do so, you may be in conflict.

The easiest conflict to resolve is that caused by communication. Any time you can reduce conflict to a discussion of communication or methods, you will be able to resolve it much easier.

The next easiest is conflict over methods. It gets harder to resolve conflict over goals. By far the worst conflict to resolve is that over values and beliefs. But most conflict can be managed without wrecking relationships and goals, if you can talk through them together.

Sit down with your parents sometime and go through this list.

1. What do you like about your relationship? What don't you like?
2. What can be changed?
3. What can you tolerate that can't be changed?
4. What can't you tolerate?
5. What can you do to improve your situation?

Share Sheet: Motivation

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

For each of the following activities that apply to you, share whether you do it because of outside *pressure* or because it's a deep down *priority* for you.

<i>Pressure</i>	<i>Priority</i>
_____	_____ going to school
_____	_____ working
_____	_____ cleaning my room
_____	_____ helping others who are in need
_____	_____ going to church
_____	_____ doing service projects
_____	_____ maintaining the car
_____	_____ caring for pets
_____	_____ spending time with family
_____	_____ doing dishes
_____	_____ cooking
_____	_____ eating
_____	_____ sleeping
_____	_____ giving money to charities
_____	_____ protesting abortion

_____	_____	practicing a musical instrument
_____	_____	visiting those who are sick or elderly
_____	_____	protesting social issues
_____	_____	repairing the house
_____	_____	volunteering at church
_____	_____	participating in sports
_____	_____	participating in after-school activities
_____	_____	attending youth group meetings
_____	_____	Other _____
_____	_____	Other _____

Share your responses with each other

- How much time do you spend doing what you have to do (pressures)
- How much time do you spend doing what you want to do?
- How much time are you spending doing the things God wants you to do?
- When you think of what God wants you to do, does it seem like a pressure or a priority?
- How do you decide which are the things God wants you to do?
- How do you decide whether something is a pressure or a priority?
- What do you think is the right balance between dealing with pressures and dealing with priorities?
- What keeps you from spending more time with priority items?

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about God's priorities.

Micah 6:8

John 6:35-40

Acts 20:27-31

Philippians 2:12-13

Matthew 18:34-35

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about priorities.

What are some priorities that God wants you to take on as your own priorities? What needs to change for that to happen?

Share Sheet: Me a Peacemaker?

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Complete the following sentence: *A peacemaker is . . .*

Which of the following people would you consider to be peacemaker? Why?

- ___ people who serve in the military
- ___ the police
- ___ ambassadors to other countries
- ___ mediators
- ___ you
- ___ me
- ___ the prime minister
- ___ the president
- ___ ministers
- ___ Christian Peacemaker Teams
- ___ human rights activists
- ___ development workers in poor countries
- ___ Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- ___ CIA agents
- ___ past prime ministers/presidents
- ___ other _____
- ___ other _____

- Name some people you know whom you consider to be peacemakers.
- What opportunities have you had to be a peacemaker?
- In what ways are you a peacemaker?
- How do you feel when you make peace?
- How do peacemakers actually make peace
- What equipment should they have?
- Do you think violence can ever be part of peacemaking? Why or why not?

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about peacemaking:

Psalm 34:14

Proverbs 12:20

Matthew 5:9

Romans 12:17-21

Philippians 4:4-9

James 3:17-18

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about peacemakers and peacemaking. Of the examples you've talked about, which peacemakers best show God's way of making peace?

What do you believe God is saying to you about being a peacemaker? Talk about attitudes and actions.

Share Sheet: Peer Pressure

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

I feel peer pressure is:

- a. Good
- b. Bad
- c. Ugly
- d. All the above
- e. None of the above

Explain your answer.

Peer pressure influences(check all that apply):

- the clothes I wear
- the parties I go to
- the friends I have
- the car I drive
- the food I eat
- the church I attend
- the electronic stuff I have
- the shoes I wear
- the hairstyle I have
- the sports I play
- the activities I engage in
- the people I date
- the beverages I drink
- the house I live in

- _____ the neighborhood where I live
- _____ the movies and television shows I watch
- _____ the Internet sites I visit
- _____ the clubs I belong to
- _____ the music I listen to
- _____ Other _____

Tell about a time when you your peers pressured you to do something—either positive or negative.

- Were these experiences positive or negative?
- What feelings do you recall?
- Who was involved?
- What consequences did you and others experience?
- How did it affect your relationship with the others involved?
- Does peer pressure influence you? Why or why not?

Tell about a time when you exerted peer pressure on others.

- How did you feel?
- How did others respond?
- What consequences did you and others experience?

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about peer pressure.

Romans 12:1-2
Romans 14:21
1 Corinthians 15:33
Hebrews 11:24-26

In general, what do you think the Bible is saying about peer pressure?
What will you do about it?

- Be a positive peer influence?
- Challenge friends to consider the consequences of their actions?
- What commitment could you make now?

Share Sheet: Possessions

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

On paper, list all the things you each own. Include clothes, shoes, toys, electronic gadgets, property, buildings, etc. Then circle five to ten things that are the most valuable to you. Estimate how many dollars these things would cost to buy.

In a second list, write the things that you still need or would like to have.

Finally, write your answer to the question: If I could own anything in the world it would be . . .

Share your lists with each other as you feel free. Then, talk about the following: How do you feel about material things?

- Why do you want things and buy things?
- Do you worry about the things you own? If so, how much time and energy do you spend worrying about them?
- How do you feel when something you own gets broken or destroyed?
- How do you feel when something you own gets taken away from you?

God's View

Read and discuss the following Scriptures:

Matthew 19:16-30. What does Jesus say are the rewards for being rich? What are the rewards for being poor?

2 Corinthians 6:9-10. What does the apostle Paul say about possessions?

1 John 3:16-20. What does God want from people?

Summarize what you believe the Bible is saying about God's attitude to the things that we own.

- What do you feel God is saying to you about the things you have?
- Is God asking you to literally sell everything and give to the poor?
- If not, what are some ways that you can live out God's values in your own relationship to things?

Share Sheet: Self-Esteem *(The Way I Feel About Myself)*

How to use a mentoring share sheet

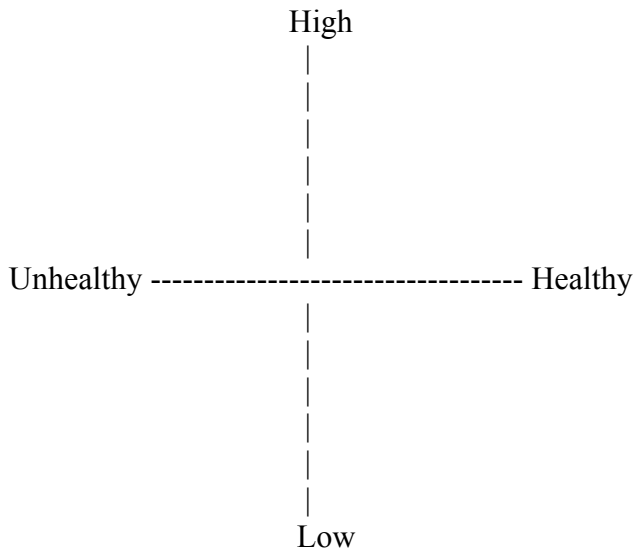
If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Check all of the following that apply

When I look in the mirror I:

- see a good looking person
- get a sick feeling inside
- see someone who can do anything she/he wants to
- want to give her/him a big hug
- see someone who could lose a few pounds
- see someone who is just the right weight
- see a very competent and committed person
- like who I see
- don't like who I see
- see someone who needs a friend
- want to change what I see
- am very pleased with what I see
- see someone who has great worth
- see someone who isn't worth much
- other _____
- other _____
- other _____

My self-esteem right now is (mark where you believe your self-esteem is on the graph):



Share with each other how you currently feel about yourself.

- Why do you feel the way you do?
- When have you felt the worst about yourself?
- When have you felt the best about yourself?
- What helps you feel good about yourself?
- What brings you to feel bad about yourself?
- Who/what influences your self-esteem?
- What determines whether you feel good about yourself?

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about self-esteem.

Genesis 1:26-31

Psalm 139:13-16

John 3:16-17

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about how God views people.

Why do you think people have trouble seeing themselves the way God sees them?

What do you believe God is saying to you about the way you feel about yourself?

What habits of thinking and acting could help you live out of God's high esteem of you?

What will you do to get into those habits?

Share Sheet: Truth-telling

How to use a mentoring share sheet

If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Which of the following apply best to you:

In my life, I have . . .

- never lied
- lied very little
- lied some
- lied a lot
- lied several times a day

If I were Pinocchio, how long would my nose be if it grew a little each time I lied?

I lie because:

- it's fun
- my friends do it
- I might get in trouble if I told the truth
- my parents would be disappointed in me if they knew the truth
- if the truth were known I could go to jail
- I would be extremely embarrassed if anyone found out the truth
- no one would love me if they knew the truth
- I would be kicked out of church
- I would be expelled from school
- I'm afraid of what people will think about me
- I like tricking people
- I want to keep people guessing what the truth really is
- other _____
- other _____

What are three lies you have told in your life? What were the consequences?

How do you usually feel when you lie?

- Bad about yourself?
- Neither good or bad?

How do you feel when someone lies to you?

Why do you think people lie?

Are there situations where lying is OK? Why or why not? Give examples.

What do you think God's position is on lying?

God's View

If you have a Bible concordance, look for the number of times the word truth appears in the four Gospels and in the entire New Testament.

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about lying.

Proverbs 12:22

Proverbs 16:13

Proverbs 19:22

Colossians 3:5-11

Read John 8:32-59. Why is truth-telling so important in Jesus' work?

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about lying and telling the truth. What do you believe God is saying to you about your attitudes and practice with regard to truth-telling? What would you like to keep doing? What would you like to change?

Share Sheet: Vocation (*What is God Calling Me to Do?*)

How to use a mentoring share sheet
 If it feels appropriate, pray before or after your sharing. • Make sure you both answer the questions. • Be positive; avoid judgmental comments. • Share both facts and feelings. • Show appreciation when sharing goes deep. • Listen with your eyes, ears, body, and heart. • Paraphrase to each other what you have heard and allow time for clarification. • Give time for thought. You don't have to fill silence with words.

Each of you should have a copy of the following checklist. Before you share together, fill out your chart, putting an X in the column that matches your response.

Yes	No	Sometimes	
___	___	___	1. I believe I am created in the image of God.
___	___	___	2. I feel God's guidance in my life.
___	___	___	3. I feel I have God-given gifts and talents I can use in serving God.
___	___	___	4. I don't know what I am going to do when I'm done with school/finished my current work contract/ready to retire.
___	___	___	5. I am open to God's leading and directing my life.
___	___	___	6. I am willing to go where God desires to use me.
___	___	___	7. I'm not sure God created me with a set purpose for my life.
___	___	___	8. I don't feel my plans for my life fit together with God's hopes and desires for my life.
___	___	___	9. As long as I am happy with what I do with my life, God is happy.
___	___	___	10. There are certain kinds of work that as a Christian I cannot do.
___	___	___	11. I will do what God calls me to do someday, but right now I have other plans.
___	___	___	13. My priority in life is to make a lot of money.
___	___	___	14. I wish God would give me a direct sign telling me what to do with my life.

Definitions

Vocation. Work you choose to do because you feel God has called you to do it. Your vocation is bigger than the job you have; it is connected to your whole life-purpose.

Occupation. The skill-set you use in your job, so that you can make a living.

Use the following questions to explore the world of work and vocation.

Do you currently work? If so where? What do you do?

Why do you work (or want to work)?

- _____ to feel I'm worth something
- _____ to make money to buy things
- _____ to keep me from getting bored
- _____ to serve God
- _____ to be a servant to others
- _____ to keep me from a life of crime
- _____ to utilize my talents so they don't go to waste
- _____ to please my parents
- _____ to maintain my car
- _____ to make house payments
- _____ so my kids have clothes, shoes, food, and a roof over their heads.
- _____ so I can contribute money to worthy causes
- _____ other _____
- _____ other _____

- Do you approach work as a way to make a living or as a way to live your commitment to God?
- What motivates you to work (or to want to work)?
- Are some types of work inappropriate for a Christian? What?
- What connection is there between your work (or your desire to work) and your commitment to Jesus?
- Do you believe there should be a connection between your job and serving Jesus? Why or why not?

God's View

Read the following Scriptures and talk about what they say about vocation:

Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

Matthew 9:35-38

Mark 8:34-38

John 6:26-27

Acts 13:1-3

Ephesians 4:11-13

Summarize what you believe the Bible says about work and vocation.

What do you believe God is saying to you about God's call in your life? How can you imagine God using you in your job situation? What types of work will you do? What types of work won't you do?

Where do you feel God is leading you in terms of your work and vocation? What steps do you want to take to explore your vocation further?