

Understanding Mentoring

What is Mentoring?

A mentor is a person who shares their knowledge, skills, and experiences to help another person grow. In Second Chance Churches, the role of the mentor is to provide practical, emotional and spiritual support and be a positive role model in the returning citizen's life. Mentors:

- Listen
- Are nonjudgmental
- Help mentees set goals and stay focused on the big picture
- Help mentees problem-solve and think about the choices they can make
- Maintain regular contact so mentees know there is someone they can rely on
- Offer prayer and emotional support
- Help returning citizens connect into the church and offer referrals to community programs

Why Mentoring?

1. Jesus modeled it and it was His method for spreading the Gospel.
2. Recent research supports the effectiveness of mentoring, making it popular and readily accepted.
3. People heal, grow and mature in relationships.

Biblical Examples (mentoring is rooted in Biblical principles):

*Elijah and Elisha
Barnabas and Saul
Paul and Timothy*

*Moses and Joshua
Samuel and Saul
David and Jonathan*

*Jesus and Disciples
Naomi and Ruth
Paul and Various*

Important Components

RELATIONSHIP OVER ACTIVITY:

How you do it is more important than what you do

QUALITY OF THE RELATIONSHIP:

Building trust, listening, following through on commitments, etc.

PERSEVERANCE:

Meeting regularly over a long period of time and overcoming barriers

ENCOURAGE THE MENTEE IN WHAT THEY DO:

Learn about and take interest in mentees interests and goals

STRUCTURE:

Caring by putting effort into planning activities and facilitating intentional conversations, checking in around goals



*“Entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also”
2 Timothy 2:2*

Active Listening in Mentoring

What is Active Listening?

Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding and strengthens relationships. Active listening is one of the most important skills of a good mentor!

When you talk with your mentee, try to remember to:

- **Be Present:** Clear your mind of unnecessary thoughts and distractions so you can give her or him your undivided attention.
- **Body Language:** Be aware of your body language. Pay attention to your mentee's facial expressions, gestures and body language.
- **Listen to Understand:** Read between the lines for your mentee's feelings. Learn to say, "How did that make you feel?"
- **Open-ended Questions:** Ask open-ended questions. Don't ask, "How was work today?" Instead ask, "What did you do during work today?" Then, as appropriate, ask nonthreatening follow-up questions.
- **Use Reflections:** Restate in your own words—what you think your mentee has said. When paraphrasing is accurate, your mentee will feel understood. If it is off the mark, it invites her or him to clarify and also reminds you to listen more closely. Ask questions when you don't understand.
- **Empathize:** Put yourself in your mentee's "shoes," and try to understand the world from her or his perspective.
- **Non-judgmental Posture:** Put aside preconceived ideas, and refrain from passing judgment.
- **Minimal Encouragers:** Acknowledge that you are listening by occasionally nodding your head and saying things like, "I see."
- **Respect:** Give your mentee the same respect that you desire for yourself when you are talking to someone and remember their infinite worth.

Taken from Cobbs, R., Sherk, J., Jucovy, L. (2009). Mentoring Former Prisoner: A Guide for Reentry Programs. Ready4Work



"Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry."

James 1:19

How to kill a conversation:

- Tell the speaker that the way he or she feels is wrong: “It’s silly to feel that way.”
- Don’t look at the person who is speaking to you.
- Sit slouched over, look distracted, drum your fingers on the table, or use some other body language to signal to the speaker that you’re not really interested.
- While the person is speaking, think about what you’re going to say in reply. It’s not possible to be forming your own words and concentrating on the speaker’s at the same time—so the response you’re planning is unlikely to be very useful.

How to kill a conversation on the telephone:

- Be totally silent for minutes at a time while your mentee is talking.
- Don’t say, “I see” or “OK,” or ask any questions. That way, your mentee will wonder if you’re even there.
- Do something else while the conversation is taking place: work at your computer, read your email, do dishes, fold laundry, pay bills.

10 Commandments in Mentoring Relationships

- 1. Establish the mentoring relationship:** The mentor and mentee decide to engage in a mentoring relationship
- 2. Agree upon a purpose:** Determine the goals and purpose of the relationship
- 3. Determine the meeting interval:** How often will you meet?
- 4. Determine the type of accountability:** What goals will you work on and check-in around?
- 5. Set up communication mechanics:** How will you meet (in-person, phone, virtual)?
- 6. Clarify confidentiality:** What will be kept in confidence and what will not?
- 7. Set a life-cycle of the relationship:** Determine how long you will meet. Or when you will check-in to decide.
- 8. Evaluate the relationship often:** Check-in at regular intervals to see how the relationship is going from both person’s perspective. What’s helpful? What can improve? What has been challenging?
- 9. Modify as needed:** Make a plan to modify the relationship as needed.
- 10. Bring the relationship to a close:** Intentionally close or transition the relationship. Do not just stop meeting.

Taken from the book Connecting by Robert “Bobby” Clinton