

MENTORING NETWORK



Becoming more like Jesus, together.

WHY MENTORING?

Though our lives are more connected to others than ever before, there is a growing need in our culture for a connection that goes beyond surface level discussion and social media. Sociologists have called this the “loneliness epidemic.” It’s estimated that most adults have one or fewer confidants in their lives today.

We believe God has wired us for connection, and that we become more like Jesus by walking alongside one another. Each person has a deep need to be seen, known and heard. Mentors provide another person with a unique and safe place to be vulnerable, sharing their heart and life. In doing so, mentors then have the unique opportunity to listen and discern what God might be saying and leading.

WHAT IS MENTORING?

Mentoring is commitment to intentionally walk alongside another person. It’s different than simply meeting up for coffee with a friend here or there. Mentoring is not always a formal role or title, but at times it can be, as you *intentionally* walk alongside someone.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A MENTOR?

The role of a mentor is not primarily to disperse wisdom or provide expert advice. Rather, it consists of three simple things: **1) Listening**, **2) Asking Good Questions**, and **3) Praying**. These three activities make up the primary role of a mentor. Over time there will be lots of opportunity to share some of your own story, offer perspective or share your experience but it’s important to keep these three things at the forefront of your mentoring relationship.

WHO SHOULD BE A MENTOR?

Most of us feel inadequate to mentor others well. But mentoring is not reserved for experts, professionals, or wise old saints. Intentionally walking alongside another person is something most people are capable of doing. As we come both humbly and confidently to a mentoring relationship, we discover God uses our unique personality, skills and experience to impact others.

FORMAT:

- **Size:** Groups of twos or threes, depending on the preference of both mentees and mentors.
- **Commitment:** Two semesters (September-April), with an optional third semester to be determined by mentor/mentee (May-August).*
*Ongoing mentoring relationships beyond the two semesters should be initiated by the mentee.
- **Meeting Frequency & Length:** Suggested frequency is two meetings per month for 1-2 hours, though this may vary based on the mentoring relationship and capacity. Anything beyond 2 hours should be initiated by the mentee. We encourage the mentee to take responsibility for the frequency of meeting, with a minimum of one meeting per month.
- **Large Group Sessions:** Each semester we will have one large group session for mentors and mentees, focused on personal growth and self-discovery. These sessions are exclusive for those in the mentoring network and will be significant times of connection and growth. They're not mandatory, but highly encouraged.

EXPECTATIONS FOR MENTORS

- **Spiritual Maturity** - Everyone is in process, and nobody is perfect. However, mentoring is a role of spiritual leadership and requires a level of spiritual depth and maturity.
- **Initiative** - Ideally a mentoring relationship takes shape organically, but initially it may require the mentor to take the initiative, plan meetings, and follow up. Taking initiative early on will show a level of care and commitment to your mentee.
- **Availability** - Mentoring requires time. It's possible you may be excited about mentoring but actually too busy to do it. Before committing to mentoring, consider your schedule and if there is enough space in it to add a mentoring relationship.
- **Consistent** - Small things go a long way in a mentoring relationship. Setting reminders for your mentoring times, arriving early, being present in the meeting, and committing to the scheduled times are important qualities.
- **Equipping** - We ask you attend our yearly mentoring workshop, and read the book "A Mentoring Guide" provided by The House. Additionally, our pastoral team is available to meet throughout the mentoring process to discern whether this opportunity is the right fit for you, and to offer any other input or equipping.

FIRST MEETING:

Your first meeting may be the most important one. In it, you set the tone, expectations, and boundaries for your relationship. You also have the opportunity to determine whether you and your mentee are a good fit for one another. Here's a few things to consider and clarify in your first meeting:

- **Expectations for your time together:** People come with all sorts of ideas about what a mentoring relationship looks like. It's important to clarify what your role is. You're not an expert who is there to disperse wisdom and advice but rather someone to come alongside. You may want to discuss any other previous mentoring experience to uncover any hidden expectations.
- **Meeting schedule:** Near the end of your time, figure out how often your mentee can meet, suggesting twice a month as a good starting point. Clarify the duration of the relationship, and any particular semester end dates.
- **Meeting length:** When you meet, how long will you be together? Most meetings are between 1-2 hours. What works best for both parties?
- **Specific Goals:** This meeting is a great time to field any goals or expectations from the mentee. Are they wanting to work through something specific? (eg. strengthfinders, a book on spiritual growth, developing spiritual rhythms, serving, etc.). There should be no pressure placed on the mentee—other goals and resources may come up organically as you walk alongside them.

OPTIONAL RESOURCES TO EXPLORE

Based on the maturity, experience and depth of the mentee, some additional activities/resources may enhance their time being mentored. Here are a few ideas:

- **Emotionally Healthy Spirituality** - Optional resource to work through.
Pros: explores deep parts of our formation, character, past, and growth.
Cons: can be heavy for many people and can feel a little much.
- **Spiritual Practices (Rhythms, Practicing the Way, Celebration of Discipline, Bible Reading Plan)** - Having something "spiritual" to help people connect with God. Can become a talking point throughout the mentoring sessions.
- **Serving:** Volunteering at The House or another organization may be a helpful "next step" to coincide with their growth.

FAQS

Where should we meet?

- Initially, it's best to meet in a public space like a coffee shop or park. If walking is something you and your mentee would prefer then that's a great option. Avoid meeting in your home as this can change the dynamic.

Do I have to meet every two weeks?

- The short answer is no, although every two weeks is a good target. Scheduling conflicts, or unexpected circumstances will come up so it may be every three weeks or at times weekly. You can determine what's best, with twice a month as a target goal.

Am I expected to pay for coffee each time?

- Not every time, but it's best to pay for their coffee or treat the first few times you meet. This will set the tone, and will hopefully be reciprocated as time goes on. You are not expected to pay for their coffee every single time.

Is there a curriculum to follow?

- No, the primary purpose of this mentoring is to come alongside another person. As you meet, there may be goals or ideas that come from conversation to explore further but initially the goal is to support, not overwhelm with resources or content.

What happens if the person I'm mentoring wants to continue after a year?

- That's great! Though there is no expectation each mentoring relationship will continue, it's a good thing when they do. This should not be implied, as the commitment on both sides is for two semesters. If your capacity changes or you are no longer able to mentor them, communicate this gently at the end of two semesters.

What do I do if I feel out of my depth?

- Being a mentor does not mean being someone's clinical counsellor. If you feel someone would be better served with a therapist or pastoral care, our pastors are available to connect and would gladly refer to a clinical counsellor. We are available to discern next steps as your mentoring relationship develops.

What if I'm already mentoring someone?

- That's great. You're welcome to continue on with them, or invite them to be part of our mentoring network so they can join for our large group sessions and receive added support from The House.