

## Making The Most Of A Mentoring Relationship

H. Kenyon offered this concise definition of mentoring: “Teaching in the context of relationship.” The two non-negotiables of Biblical mentoring are relationship and learning. Apart from those core components though, mentoring relationships take on many different forms:

- some are able to sit in a park and read the Bible openly; others will be sharing prayer requests in code
- some have previous relationships with their mentors; some will have to learn how to pronounce their names
- some will work in same building and live in same neighborhood; for others, their lives will be drastically different and they may live hours away from each other
- some will experience an immediate connection because of being in similar or familiar seasons of life; for others the generation gap will seem as wide as the ocean
- some will choose their mentors; others will have their mentors assigned to them

Different forms, but the same substance can fill each relationship with life-transforming potential!

Below I offer some suggestions for those being mentored:

### *1. discuss mutual expectations with your mentor*

- in principle: share your personal definitions of mentoring & create new expectations together
- in practice: identify how often you plan to meet, the duration of your commitment, give your mentor some insight into how do you learn best, ask them how they teach best

### *2. prioritize your commitment*

- by remembering and being prepared for your times together.
- though it should be normative, being mentored is a rare gift in day—treasure it well.

### *3. personally identify areas of needed change*

- spend time in prayer asking the Father to reveal areas He wants you to focus on through this mentoring relationship
- share those areas with your mentor and give them permission to teach you and to hold you accountable.

### *4. combine this relational opportunity with disciplined solitude*

- wait on God not for answers but because He is worthy of being with! Soak in silence as you rest with God alone.

### *5. remember that you are a human being mentored by a human*

- we all know that highly successful leaders do not always have interpersonal sensitivity at the core of their gifting cluster!
- release your mentor from what you thought they should be and appreciate them for who they actually are

6. *identify where your mentor shines and focus on gleaning from that strength*

7. *keep a journal of questions, wisdom, advice, pilgrimage*

8. *be a learner, not a leach*

- develop the discipline of going to Jesus first
- respect their personal and family boundaries

9. *intercede for your mentor*

- your prayers will be a powerful gift to them.

10. *beware of mentoring myths*

- *myth one: My mentor will become my best friend.*
  - Possibly, but the sign of success in a mentoring relationship is not naming your children after each other!
  - The goal is to influence each other toward Christ and that can be done without becoming best friends.
- *myth two: My mentor should be stronger than all of my strengths and strong in all of my weaknesses.*
  - Yes, and His name is Jesus!
  - Intellectuals especially snag on this myth. Some feel they can only learn from others with a higher IQ. There's another word for that: arrogance. Be careful: knowledge can become a substitute for intimacy.
  - We can learn from everyone who follows Jesus—if we take the road of humility.
- *myth three: It's their responsibility to take the initiative to connect, study, or hold me accountable.*
  - If you were four years old I'd say yes. But this is an adult mentoring relationship and their role isn't parent it's coach.
  - And ...ESP is NOT listed in Corinthians as one of the spiritual gifts. Talk with them, tell them, take initiative. They can not read your mind.
- *myth four: This relationship is the key I've been waiting for.*
  - Not "the," but definitely "a." God grows us in symphony, not in single notes. He choreographs many voices from many places to guide us in His Truth.