

MENTORSHIP & INTRODUCTIONS INSTRUCTIONS RESOURCE

Thank you so much for your interest in mentoring grade 12 students! We are grateful for your heart for teenagers and your desire to help them grow in their faith, as we know that this transitional period of their lives is incredibly formative. Your willingness to invest in their lives, especially regarding their spiritual growth, can have a great impact on them now and in the future.

At Power to Change—Students, we want to help college and university students know Jesus and experience his power to change, but we realize that there are Christian students whose faith journeys begin long before post-secondary. As these students graduate high school, they have numerous decisions to make about who they are and what they want to do next. This is why we created NEXT. The purpose of our NEXT ministry is to help students navigate this major life change by helping them make connections and find community in their new post-secondary settings. We also want to equip leaders, teachers, and mentors to be able to help these students by investing in their development at this crucial time. That's why we have made resources like this one.

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This mentorship resource was created in response to the Renegotiating Faith Study conducted by P2C—Students, in partnership with several other Canadian ministries. The study found that “with mentors, mentees grow up more quickly and are more likely to embrace faith.” (pg 51) One of the important aspects of a mentoring relationship, as outlined in the study, is that they “can provide tailored and enduring support.” Thus, this mentoring resource is meant to provide a focused and personal approach to guiding grade 12 students through the transition from youth to adulthood.

The topics that this resource covers each month relate to both the changes and decisions that accompany the transition out of high school and into the realm of work and higher education. It also covers practical things that students need to learn and consider as they become independent adults. While these topics and questions help students consider the practical changes they are making, the resource is designed to simultaneously encourage them to consider how their faith relates to each of these aspects of their lives. It also encourages them to be intentional about their spiritual growth, as well as their level of maturity.

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The Renegotiating Faith Study also found a crucial link between mentorship relationships and students getting connected to Christian communities in their respective universities/colleges. The research shows that those who have a mentor (or people from their home church) who can help them make connections with campus groups or local churches are far more likely to get and stay involved than those who do not have such a relationship. Without mentors or liaisons, many students are deciding what kind of people they are going to be, and who they are as adult individuals, without finding their identities in churches or in Christian communities; their faith and church involvement are not central to their sense of self.

Our goal in creating this resource is to provide mentors with a potential guide to helping grade 12 students navigate the journey through graduation to post-secondary education or work. The desire for this particular resource is that, along with mentorship, it would help graduating students make the choice to continue to grow in

their faith, and that they would desire to connect with Christian communities beyond high school. We want to help them make faith and community a part of their lives as they seek to discover who they are as fully-fledged individuals. Our hope for these students is the same as Paul's wish for the Colossians: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness." (Col 2:6-7). Your role as a mentor is to help students become rooted in their faith in Christ so that they will continue to live their lives in Christ; this resource is designed to equip you to do just that.

WHAT IS MENTORSHIP?

We understand that being asked to engage in mentorship can cause you to feel overwhelmed and unsure. These feelings stem from an unclear understanding of what mentorship looks like. We want to take some time to clarify these terms to make this invitation more clear.

Through the Renegotiating Faith report, we have been able to draw out definitions of "mentor" and "mentorship." The study found that the idea of mentoring can be reframed as "'intergenerational friendships,' 'sharing life,' or 'non-parental adult investment in children and youth'" (pg 51).

Many adults who are invited to become mentors may feel a sense of inability to take on the role. Individuals might turn down the invitation due to feelings of inadequacy regarding knowledge of the bible, strength of their personal prayer life, lack of experience, or lack of awareness regarding the current teenage culture. However, through the reframed term stated above, feelings of inadequacy do not disqualify an individual from being a mentor. You don't need specialized knowledge or training, and you're not expected to have everything perfectly figured out. A mentor is simply a person who is willing to invest in an intergenerational friendship and share their lives with a younger individual—in this case, a grade 12 student.

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Mentorship is a relationship where a younger individual may meet with a spiritually older Christian to discuss life, faith, and topics which are relevant to them. This relationship is a place where a young adult can find a safe space "in which to engage difficult issues, ask tough questions and

reveal legitimate doubts that hinder their faith." As a mentor, you can create this safe space by allowing your mentee to know that they "do not risk their place in the community by expressing their questions, doubts or ideas" (pg 50).

Once a mentee feels safe in the relationship, there are many topics that can be addressed in conversation. The Renegotiating Faith report identifies the need for one of these topics to be the mentor's identification of the mentee's "gifts and talents," as well as the posing of the question: "How might God be calling you to serve him with the gifts and talents he's given you?" (pg 161). This stems from the teen's need to find their identity. When a mentor takes time to pose this question and help a mentee process it, the mentor provides their mentee an opportunity to negotiate new roles in a Christian community as an adult.

Many of the mentorship meetings in this resource were designed to help you support your student as they consider connecting to a new Christian community in the upcoming stages of their life. The Renegotiating Faith report states that this is one of the most important influences that a mentor can have:

Where someone from a home church had tried to make the connection, more than two-thirds (68%) had gone on to connect with a new church, compared to less than one in four (23%) of those who had not had anyone making a connection for them. Young adults who had had a connection made for them by someone from their home church were roughly three times as likely to go on to connect with a new local church after moving out of their parents' home (pg 131).

If you are able to help your mentee connect with a Christian community for their upcoming transition, you will be giving them the tools and the support base needed to continue growing in their faith.

In summary, “[t]he focus of spiritual mentoring [...] is to help people pay attention to what God is doing in their lives and to respond. It is not ‘directing’ others in the sense of imposing an agenda on them and telling them what to do. Rather it is meant to be friendship: people who listen deeply, and who may point out what God is doing and help mentees to discern God’s agenda” (pg 50-51).

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WHAT AM I COMMITTING TO?

In regards to the resource we have created, first and foremost, you are committing to meeting with a Grade 12 student to support them as they walk through their final year of high school and into their subsequent life stage (post-secondary or entering the workforce). Committing to this student means that you will meet with them twelve times throughout the upcoming school year to go through the mentorship cards.

However, each and every mentorship relationship is unique to the individuals participating. Therefore, your commitment will be unique to you and your mentee. There are certain components that will be different in each mentorship relationship, such as how many meetings occur, appropriate meeting locations, and the length of each meeting.

This mentorship resource has been designed for you to have 12 meetings over the course of a year. These meetings will occur once a month from September to June, then one meeting will occur over the summer (July-August). Finally, one follow-up meeting to check in on how your mentee has transitioned to their new life stage is scheduled for the following September.

During each of these meetings, you will use the mentorship cards provided in this resource to guide your conversations. These meeting are designed to take approximately 1 hour. However, if both the mentor and mentee are available and interested in a longer meeting, then planning for 1.5 hours may allow for more discussion and growth in relationship.

HOW TO INVITE A GRADE 12 STUDENT INTO MENTORSHIP

Initiating the mentorship relationship may feel daunting. However, we would like to support you in this process as well.

First, you could approach your church’s pastor or youth pastor and share with them your desire to mentor a graduating youth. You can ask them to help you connect with a Grade 12 student and help you make arrangements to meet, although this may not always be an option. You may also desire to mentor an individual with whom you might not have an existing connection. We are excited for those relationships to grow too!

Once you have found a grade 12 student to mentor, the next step is asking them to commit to meeting with you throughout the year. To help you with this conversation, we have written a few sample scripts for you to consider as you invite a grade 12 to be your mentee. Here are a few things to keep in mind before speaking to this student: they may not understand what mentorship is, they may need to be told how mentorship would benefit them, and they may want to hear a reason for why you are interested in mentoring them.

IF YOU KNOW THE STUDENT ALREADY:

"Hi ____! I would like to talk to you about something. I have been thinking about you a lot lately and how you are going into your final year of high school. I know that this year will be full of decisions to make, and I would like to mentor you through it. This would mean that we would meet up once a month to talk about what is going on in your life. I would like to do this with you, as I know how important it is to have someone, besides your parents, walking alongside you through your final year of high school. If you are willing to do this with me, I believe that we could learn from each other. We can talk about whatever is going on in your life, and we will be able to see how God is working in your life and where he is leading you! Would you be willing to meet with me?"

IF YOU DO NOT KNOW THE STUDENT ALREADY:

"Hi _____. I know you do not know me, but _____ suggested that I talk to you. I have recently been praying about becoming a mentor to a grade 12 student, and I would like to ask you if you would be willing to meet with me to do some mentorship. What I mean by mentorship is meeting to talk about whatever is going on in your life, or discussing other relevant topics that I'd like to cover with you. We would meet at a local _____(coffeeshop/church) once a month throughout your final year of high school. If you are willing to do this with me, I believe that we could become friends, and that you could teach me about what teenagers are learning or going through, and I could share some of my experiences with you. We would also have time to talk about our faith and what God is doing in our lives, and where he is leading you after high school. I know you do not know me well, but I remember being in high school and the decisions that I had to make before I graduated. I would just like to be there to talk with you as you think through those decisions in your own life."

Each and every invitation to mentorship will be different based on your relationship with the student and your desire to mentor them. Before you invite them, pray for them. Pray that God will soften their hearts so that they will be willing to meet with you and grow from the experience.

HOW TO USE THE RESOURCE

The following instructions describe the way the resource was intended to be used, however, please use this resource in a way that works best for you and your mentee.

First you will need to download the Mentorship Cards. They are available in phone size or tablet size. The cards are designed to be taken with you on your phone or tablet. They can also be printed, although we recommend only printing the phone size. These are to be brought to your meeting to help direct your conversations.

When you open the resource you will see a collection of cards that have been colour-coded for each meeting. Each set of colored cards will include a purpose card, walk of life card, life with God card and a prayer card. The intention for each card is listed below:

PURPOSE



This card will identify the goal of the meeting. The goal may be met by using the following two cards, but we encourage you to use additional questions of your own to reach this goal too!

WALK OF LIFE



This card will identify 3-4 questions or groups of questions to ask your mentee regarding day-to-day areas of their life. These questions are designed to help you reach the goal stated in the purpose card.

LIFE WITH GOD



This card will again identify 3-4 questions or groups of questions to ask your mentee, but these are designed to help you discuss how their relationship with Jesus applies to every area of their life. These questions will help you to meet the goal stated in the purpose card, but, more importantly, point your mentee to Christ.

PRAYER



This card will provide you with one or two prayer starters related to the discussion that you can use to pray for your mentee before ending the meeting.

To prepare for your meeting, we suggest taking some time to read over the plan for your meeting a day in advance. Familiarize yourself with the four cards for that specific meeting. Later, as you begin to develop a relationship with your mentee, you will be able to prepare for your meetings to relate more specifically to your mentee as you learn what questions to ask your mentee, or how to phrase questions more effectively.

Please note that even though each month has a set of questions with a specific goal, your mentee may come to your meeting wanting to discuss a different aspect of their life. It is okay to talk about alternative topics as long as both members are comfortable with the discussions. Furthermore, if your mentee brings up a topic from a different month, feel free to change the order around to meet your mentee's current needs. Additionally, this may mean that you may decide to stop using the mentorship cards, as you and your mentee are able to discuss current and relevant topics to their life. Deciding to eliminate the cards from the mentorship meetings is okay, however we encourage you to follow through with all of the remaining agreed-upon meetings, to maintain a structure in your meetings that continues to point your mentee to Jesus and involvement in a Christian community, and to ensure that you are praying with your mentee.

Finally, after the intended meetings are complete, the agreed-upon mentorship is finished. However, continued relationship with your mentee is encouraged, as that relationship will support them in finding and maintaining connection to Christian communities in their next stage of life.