

New Life Mentoring Framework

We have created this guide to help you understand the role of mentoring relationships and give a sense of how we see them being a healthy part of the New Life community and discipleship.

Much of this guide has been adapted from the Crossroads Mentoring Framework which they put together with help from Pathways Bible College Mentorship Guides by Craig Barrow. We want to acknowledge them both for their content and help in developing this.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring relationships come in many shapes and forms. Ultimately, they are relationships built on the desire to walk together toward Christlikeness as we navigate everyday life. The mentor inputs into the life of the mentee, as the mentee shares time with their mentor. This could happen over a coffee, a shared hobby or project, or in any space that helps facilitate a healthy level of sharing together.

The value of Mentoring

Mentoring creates the opportunity to intentionally invest and share in another person's unique journey. While the mentor is generally the one sharing input/insight and the mentee the one who receives, the benefit flows both ways as each invests in a relationship with the other and experiences God's Spirit working through it.

"Mentoring offers the freedom to recognise that each individual is unique and that their story and journey are unique as well. Wisely practised, and because of its care for the nurture of the individual, it will liberate many into a deeper experience of God and a more radical discipleship."

— Tony Horsfall, *Mentoring for Spiritual Growth: Sharing the Journey of Faith*

The Biblical framework for discipleship and Mentoring

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

— Matthew 28:18-20

Jesus not only told us to make disciples but also gave us a model to follow in doing so. He showed us that the fundamental methodology in making disciples is relationships grounded in truth and love. Jesus is the greatest disciple-maker in history, and his way works. Discipleship is the emphasis. Relationships are the method. Jesus invited people into relationships with himself; he loved them and in the process showed them how to follow God. His primary method was life-on-life.

Our Discipleship Pathway at New Life

Our vision is for all to know new life in Jesus. This transformation of new life happens through active discipleship which looks differently for people depending on their current walk with Jesus and their stage of life.

Our desire is to have multiple discipleship pathways at New Life so everyone has an opportunity to further their discipleship in a way that is most effective for them. While we hope that everyone can at least be a part of a Life Group so that they are in community, discipleship can also take place by first attending Growth Track, and from there stepping into: Alpha, Emotionally Healthy Discipleship, Night Classes, Life Keys, serving on a Team and Mentoring.

Who is a Mentor?

A good mentor is someone who shows intentionality, humility, discernment, and wisdom; all of which are developed in partnership with God's Spirit.

"God did not make this person as I would have made him... God does not will that I should fashion the other person according to the image that seems good to me, that is, in my own image... I can never know beforehand how God's image should appear in others."
— Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

The Spirit is the best mentor available to us. When a mentor speaks into the life of a person, they have no idea of who that person will become, but the Spirit does. Moreso, He knows the best way for that progress to be made.

The goal, then, is to listen to the Spirit and ensure that He is guiding the conversation and guiding the mentor's own thoughts. Remember it is the same Spirit that already dwells within us; we are one. Mentoring develops our partnership with the Spirit.

So, what we are aiming for is balance. There are valuable characteristics in mentoring like being intentional, humble, discerning and having wisdom, *but that list could get really long really quickly.*

Firstly, and probably the most obvious, a relationship with Jesus is a must. If we are striving to guide others to be like Jesus, we need to, first of all, know Him as our saviour.

Then, simply being someone who frequently revisits the Fruit of Spirit; Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self-Control. Are you striving to embody those things? Which of these areas do you need to work on?

After you've asked yourself those questions then ask for the Spirit's help and guidance to embody them more truly. We believe if you are doing that, you'll be in a healthy place to be a mentor. Also, out of continuously pursuing embodying the Fruit of the Spirit, we believe the Spirit will give you other abilities such as discernment in conversations and wisdom, as well as prompt you to be intentional because you'll be more in tune with Him from your pursuit of Him.

So, who is a mentor? A follower of Jesus who is committed to the pursuit of the Fruit of the Spirit, which we believe in turn will shape you into the person God wants you to be.

What does Mentoring practically look like?

Mentoring outworks in helping process life through both practical and theological lenses. Although people have different issues, needs, and pressures, there are several key areas that the mentor can help a person work through:

Theological topics that may come up in your mentoring relationship:

- **Consistent time with God:** Mentors might want to check in with your mentee to gain insight into how they currently hold their relationship with God.
 - Do they value regular personal time with God (beyond church services)?
 - Could they benefit from having encouragement in further developing personal time with God?
 - You might want to explore ways to cultivate more regular habits, such as trying a YouVersion Bible App plan together.
- **Identity In Christ:** The understanding of our identity plays into many parts of our lives, our views, and our behaviours, and it can be common for an individual's sense of identity to be in things like what they do, instead of who they are in Jesus Christ.
 - We believe it's important to discover and know our identity in Jesus, such as the ways Paul talks about it in *Galatians 3:27* and *Colossians 3:1-3*. You may want to consider talking about these verses or this topic as part of your time together.
- **Humility and confidence:** A key aspect of spiritual formation is developing Christ-like humility, as Paul defines in *Philippians 2*, balanced with a strong confidence that comes from their identity and calling in Christ. Often a person can have strengths in one, but room to grow in the other.
 - Your mentoring relationship could become a good place to develop awareness and growth in one or both areas. Practically, this could come in the form of developing a habit that speaks into the issue at hand for the mentee to tell themselves, such as I am a child of God. I am confident in the gifts He has given me and I trust He wants to equip me to be His follower...

- **The nature of sin:** As followers of Jesus we are all in an ongoing battle with our sin nature. When a particular sin becomes habitual it can be harder to recognize, address, or break. Many people do not see the damaging nature of sin in their lives and only see sin as something that is wrong, rather than something that is inhibiting them in their relationship with God.
 - Learning to recognise, talk about and seek further victory in these areas through the work of Jesus Christ could become an important part of your mentoring relationship. As *James 5* suggests, making a habit of confessing sin to one another could be a helpful way to normalise these conversations.

Practical aspects of a mentoring relationship:

- **Building trust**

Though it can take time, it's worthwhile developing trust within the space of your mentoring relationship. This can even be done in organic and informal times outside of the meeting – coffee, lunch, a walk, etc.

- **The importance of making time**

For a mentoring relationship to function well, a healthy amount of time will need to be prioritised in order to slow down and properly listen to your mentee.

“People are not going to feel heard by someone who is in a hurry, nor will they feel that they can approach someone who always seems to have too much going on in their lives.”

— *Jean Stairs, Listening for the Soul*

What do we do when we meet?

Since there is **no single right agenda**, the purpose, expectations, and mentoring covenant (additional document) will help determine what you do when you meet.

The following are some helpful ideas from “Spiritual mentoring: A guide for seeking and giving direction”.

For the Mentor:

1. Create a setting in which your relationship with the mentee can be comfortable and natural.
2. Remember, this time is for the mentee. The key is learning when to speak and when to listen.
3. Attend to God's agenda for the other. Prepare for your mentee in prayer. Seek to listen to the Spirit alongside listening to the mentee.

For the Mentee:

1. Prepare yourself emotionally and with prayer before you meet.
2. Seek to adjust your expectations toward listening to what God is saying/where God is working.
3. Actively pray for your mentor too.

How often should we meet?

You have the freedom to decide what level of regularity is helpful for your mentoring relationship. You may choose to meet fortnightly or monthly, for 30 mins or an hour at a time... give it time to get a sense of what level works best for your situation.

First meetings

The first meetings may require more time to get to know each other. Early on it would be important for the mentee to share key moments of their life story – for both the mentor and mentee to talk about and reflect on. It may be beneficial for the mentor to share from their life too or take the lead on this if the mentee doesn't feel up to it yet.

It is highly recommended that the mentor and mentee build a mentoring covenant. See the [additional document](#) on this.

Ongoing monitoring

Reviewing and monitoring the mentoring relationship is an ongoing process. It will be helpful to check in with each other as you go – perhaps every other month – asking questions such as:

- In what ways are these sessions helpful? What was not helpful?
- How are you feeling about how the mentoring relationship is going at this point?

Having an exit strategy

It's important that your mentoring relationship doesn't feel like you are 'locked in for life', so it's healthy to have an occasional opportunity to end the relationship when necessary. The timeline will always be up to you but is important for this to be reviewed and communicated together as your relationship develops. We recommend setting at least yearly dates for review in your mentoring covenant (if not more frequently), and setting aside a session for a more in-depth assessment to review the purpose and expectations of the relationship.

There are valid times it may be appropriate to bring the relationship to a close:

- Hopes and expectations have been achieved
- The pre-set time has been reached
- The relationship isn't gaining foreseeable traction (This is not necessarily a bad thing. It may simply be that they need something you cannot offer)

You want to be talking about the ending of the relationship for several sessions before the finish date, so there is a healthy amount of time to help wrap up or discuss anything still unresolved. How the mentoring relationship ends shapes how both you and the mentee view and remember the experience, so it is worth investing the extra time into finishing well.

A specific meeting should be set for the purpose of saying goodbye and acknowledging the change in the relationship (whatever those changes are):

- Review and reflect on accomplishments, learnings, challenges, and progress toward goals.
 - What difference/s has the relationship made?
 - In what ways will the mentee continue to work towards their goals?
 - How are they going to continue being mentored, and growing etc.?
- Discuss whether or not the relationship will continue informally (and how you will implement it)
- Express any feelings about the ending of the relationship/expressions of gratitude.

The lifecycle of a Mentoring relationship

Mentor relationships can be short-term, long-term, or somewhere in between. While each relationship finds its own pace and rhythm, they typically go through the following 4 stages:

Stage 1 – Getting to know one another/agreeing on objectives

- Preparing for the relationship – prayer, time allocation etc.
- Forming and building a relational bond.
- Make a mentoring covenant together (Be specific — Try to leave nothing to chance, knowing you can re-negotiate over time).

Stage 2 – Getting established

- Developing an honest, trusting, sincere relationship.
- Able to 'dive deeper' into topics that have come up previously.

Stage 3 – Maturing

- Relationships become more two-way as mentor and mentee learn to listen to each other.
- Relationships become more relational and intersubjective.
- Space develops to challenge and feedback on thoughts and goals.

Stage 4 – Coming to closure

- Goals are met, the relationship has served its purpose for the season, or other factors mean it's healthiest to wrap up the relationship for now.

These four stages in a mentoring relationship are based on Transformational Mentoring by Julie Hay.

Mentoring resources

As you decide on the type of mentoring relationship that will best suit you both and what would be most helpful for the mentee in their current season of life, here are some resources that can provide structure for going through the material and specific topics together. These are resources we recommend as a starting point.

Start here

- The Purple Book by Rice Brooks and Steve Murrell
- Alpha
- Freedom in Christ
- Discipleship Essentials by Greg Ogden
- Navigators Bible Study
- Emotionally Healthy Discipleship

Going further

- Flourish (Women mentoring bible study) by The Grove, Passion City Church
- Believe - Living the story of the bible to become like Jesus (Group study) by Randy Frazee with Randy Larson

RightNow Media

If you would like to equip and prepare yourself further for becoming a mentor at New Life, we recommend checking out the Mentoring in the Church series on RightNow Media. It's a series of 5-minute videos that look at different aspects of mentoring such as Essential Elements of Mentoring, Pitfalls of Mentoring, What Young Adults Are Looking For, and more!

Things to consider

Here are a few things to think about as you consider pursuing a mentoring relationship, and as the relationship takes shape:

Motivations:

- Why do I want to be a mentor/mentee in the first place?
- Do I see these motivations as healthy or unhealthy for any reason?

Relational capacity:

- Do I have the capacity to invest in another person's life, as well as the friends and family I'm currently connected with?
- Am I willing to discuss difficult/challenging questions with this person, give/receive advice, and seek to talk honestly about personal/family/job issues etc.

Expectations/differences:

- Do I have any expectations of this person's theology, spiritual goals, or understandings being the same as mine? How could we identify or navigate healthy conversation around any differences?
- Are there any other differences in culture, gender, age, or perspective that we need to consider how to navigate?

How do I find a Mentor/Mentee?

Whether you are seeking a mentor or a mentee, the process is the same:

1. First, we would ask you to prayerfully consider who already exists in your life that you could approach about being a mentor for or mentored by. Established relationships and already-formed connections can easily allow for organic mentoring relationships to develop.

- As a potential **mentor** this could be having what we refer to as an 'I see in you' conversation.
 - It can be incredibly empowering for a younger person to hear from someone older that you see great potential in them and that you would like to invest in them.
- As a potential **mentee**, it could come in the form of approaching someone older in your life and asking them to invest their wisdom into you as your mentor.
 - Doing so can be highly honouring and potential mentors are often keen to commit, knowing that you as the mentee have specifically desired life input from them.

2. If you don't have someone in mind that's totally fine, we can also connect mentors and mentees together. Head to the Mentoring section of our website nlc.nz, enter your name, and whether or not you'd like to be a mentor or mentee and we'll prayerfully consider who on the adjacent list would be a compatible fit. We will then arrange for the two of you to meet and go from there.

Support from the New Life team

If any questions you have or issues you face have gone beyond the scope of this document, we encourage you to get in contact with Pastor Pip for further support. She is available and keen to help your mentoring relationship thrive!

You can contact her at phillipam@nlc.nz.