

Mentoring Portfolio

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## Mentoring Sessions Plan

### Session #1 – Introduction / Why mentoring?

- Introduction: What's been happening in your life?
  - Tell me about your travels the past few years.
    - What opportunities did you really like?
    - Did you have some challenges?
    - Did you like what you were doing?
  - Tell me about your work experiences.
    - What did you like about each of your jobs?
    - What did you dislike about your jobs?
  - How are things going with school?
    - Are you currently pursuing your education?
    - What are you studying?
    - Are you enjoying that?
    - Do you feel good about your direction?
  - How is your family?
    - Is living at home working well for you right now?
- Why mentoring?
  - Have you had any significant mentor type relationships in your life?
  - What expectations do you have of a mentoring relationship, if any?
  - What do you want to gain from these sessions?
  - Why is this important during this season of your life?
- What does a mentoring relationship look like?
  - A mentor is someone who will walk along side you on your journey.
  - In our mentoring relationship, we promise to “appropriately and reciprocally disclose struggles, failures and temptations to a godly friend [each other] who is committed to asking hard questions, willing to challenge, and given to encouragement and prayer” (Ahlberg Calhoun, 2005, p. 122).
- Expectations: What do each of these look like?
  - Openness
  - Trust
  - Confidentiality
  - Differences
  - Tolerance
  - Respect
  - Feedback
  - Challenges
- Next Step
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

**Session #2 – Our Journey**

- Life is a journey and everyone's path is unique and has a God given purpose.
  - It is important to take a look at:
    - Where have I been?
    - Where am I now?
    - Where am I going?
    - Where do I want to end up?
    - How will I get there?
- Gaining perspective
  - “Stories are the way you capture your experiences in a form that you can understand and that you can communicate to others” (George, McClean & Craig, 2008, p. 6).
  - “But the messy, problematic aspects of your story may be the most interesting and useful in thinking about where your life experiences are leading you” (George, McClean & Craig, 2008, p. 7).
- Your life's path
  - Why would you want to map out your journey?
  - Use the analogy of walking down a path.
  - Begin to think about bumps, side roads, peaks, and valleys, etc.
- Developing as a whole person.
  - spiritual
  - relational
  - emotional
  - intellectual
  - physical
- Next Step
  - Write down some key experiences that relate to your journey.
    - critical points
    - intersections
    - wrong turns
    - Think about experiences that relate to the spiritual, relational, emotional, intellectual and physical aspects of your life.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

### **Session #3 – Reflection / Journaling**

- Reflection
  - Were you able to write down some of the key experiences that relate to your life's journey?
  - Was this an easy process?
  - What made it easy or challenging?
  
- Journaling
  - Have you ever kept a journal in your life?
  - Was this easy or difficult for you?
  - Could you see any benefit?
  - Would you be willing to journal through this mentoring process?
  - Journaling can be a catalyst for growth and reflection.
  
- Mapping your life journey
  - Get a lay of the land.
  - Start with a timeline.
  - Focus in on your significant events. Possibly identify what aspect of your life each event relates to. (spiritual, relational, emotional, intellectual, physical)
  
- Next Step
  - Draw your map.
  - Journal a couple of times about the process.
  - You do not need to share your map with me.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

**Session #4 – My Spiritual Journey**

- Reflection - Mapping your life journey
  - Was this an easy or difficult process for you?
  - Did you enjoy doing this?
  - What do you think made it challenging?
  - We are going to use this as a tool for your own reflection.
  
- Looking at your spiritual journey let's consider these questions:
  - Where have I been?
  - Where am I now?
  - Where am I going?
  - Where do I want to end up?
  - How will I get there?
  
- Possible discussion questions:
  - What have been the significant events in your faith journey?
  - Who have been the significant people in your faith development?
  - What is the hardest part of your spiritual life?
  - With what part of your spiritual life are you most satisfied?
  - What hinders you from growing in this area of your life?
  
- Tools for your journey:
  - What are some things that might help move you further down the path in the direction you want to go in this area of your life?
  
- Next Step
  - Reflect on our discussion today by journaling a couple of times.
  - Think of one or two things related to your spiritual journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change to move you in the right direction of where you want to be.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

**Session #5 – My Relational Journey**

- Reflection
  - How are you doing?
  - How are you doing with these sessions?
  - Were you able to think of two things related to your spiritual journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change?
  - What specifically might you do to practically follow through with these ideas?
- Looking at your relational journey let's consider these questions:
  - Where have I been?
  - Where am I now?
  - Where am I going?
  - Where do I want to end up?
  - How will I get there?
- Possible discussion questions:
  - What have been the significant events in your relational journey?
  - Who have been the significant people relationally?
  - What is the hardest part of your relational life?
  - With what part of your relationships are you most satisfied?
  - What hinders you from growing in this area of your life?
- Tools for your journey:
  - What are some things that might help move you further down the path in the direction you want to go in this area of your life?
- Next Step
  - Reflect on our discussion today by journaling a couple of times.
  - Think of one or two things related to your relational journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change to move you in the right direction of where you want to be.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

**Session #6 – My Emotional Journey**

- Reflection
  - How are you doing?
  - How are you doing with these sessions?
  - Were you able to think of two things related to your relational journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change?
  - What specifically might you do to practically follow through with these ideas?
- Looking at your emotional journey let's consider these questions:
  - Where have I been?
  - Where am I now?
  - Where am I going?
  - Where do I want to end up?
  - How will I get there?
- Possible discussion questions:
  - What have been the significant events in your emotional journey?
  - Who have been the significant people in your emotional development?
  - With what part of your emotional life are you most satisfied?
  - What is the hardest part of your emotional life?
  - What hinders you from growing in this area of your life?
- Tools for your journey:
  - What are some things that might help move you further down the path in the direction you want to go in this area of your life?
- Next Step
  - Reflect on our discussion today by journaling a couple of times.
  - Think of one or two things related to your emotional journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change to move you in the right direction of where you want to be.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

**Session #7 – My Intellectual Journey**

- Reflection
  - How are you doing?
  - How are you doing with these sessions?
  - Were you able to think of two things related to your emotional journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change?
  - What specifically might you do to practically follow through with these ideas?
- Looking at your intellectual journey let's consider these questions:
  - Where have I been?
  - Where am I now?
  - Where am I going?
  - Where do I want to end up?
  - How will I get there?
- Possible discussion questions:
  - What have been the significant events in your intellectual journey?
  - Who have been the significant people in your intellectual development?
  - With what part of your intellectual life are you most satisfied?
  - What is the hardest part of your intellectual life?
  - What hinders you from growing in this area of your life?
- Tools for your journey:
  - What are some things that might help move you further down the path in the direction you want to go in this area of your life?
- Next Step
  - Reflect on our discussion today by journaling a couple of times.
  - Think of one or two things related to your intellectual journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change to move you in the right direction of where you want to be.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.



**Session #8 – My Physical Journey**

- Reflection
  - How are you doing?
  - How are you doing with these sessions?
  - Were you able to think of two things related to your intellectual journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change?
  - What specifically might you do to practically follow through with these ideas?
- Looking at your physical journey let's consider these questions:
  - Where have I been?
  - Where am I now?
  - Where am I going?
  - Where do I want to end up?
  - How will I get there?
- Possible discussion questions:
  - What have been the significant events in your physical journey?
  - Who have been the significant people in your physical development?
  - With what part of your physical life are you most satisfied?
  - What is the hardest part of your physical life?
  - What hinders you from growing in this area of your life?
- Tools for your journey:
  - What are some things that might help move you further down the path in the direction you want to go in this area of your life?
- Next Step
  - Reflect on our discussion today by journaling a couple of times.
  - Think of one or two things related to your physical journey that you want to incorporate in your life or change to move you in the right direction of where you want to be.
  - Confirm the next place and time to meet.

### **The Mentoring Process: A Reflection and Analysis**

“Mentoring relationships offer an opportunity for individuals to nurture seeds in others so they might become blossoms and blossoms might become fruit, which then nourishes others” (Zachary, 2005, p. 261). Zachary provides a beautiful visual image of the mentoring process and the cyclical nature of these types of relationships. As we look at mentoring and compare it to growing seeds, which become blossoms, that turn into fruit, that will bear more seeds, we see ourselves as part of a bigger picture and a higher purpose. In the gospel of John, Jesus says “This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples” (John 15:8, NIV). Further on in that same passage of scripture Jesus goes on to say, “You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last...” (John 15:16, NIV). We are commanded, as disciples of Jesus, to be fruit bearers. Mentoring provides an opportunity to pour into others, encourage, and equip them in a very practical way. Part of my call to leadership is to understand and develop my personal capacity as a mentor. This mentoring process that I participated in, has broadened my view, expanded my ideas, taught me some valuable lessons, allowed me to grow personally, and challenged me to continue to learn and progress in this area of my leadership development.

In my pursuit to understand more about authenticity and become an authentic leader, Bill George (2007), through his book *True North*, took me on a journey of discovering more about myself, and seeing how all the parts of my journey contribute to where I am now and where my effectiveness as a leader will emerge from. “Leaders are defined by their unique life stories and the way they frame their stories to discover their passions and the purpose of their leadership” (George, 2007, p. xxvii). This tool, of mapping out the path of your life, has important value in personal leadership development, but I also see the potential for significant understanding and

insight for individuals. Rick Warren wrote an incredible book called *The Purpose Driven Life* where his whole premise was to help people discover the purpose of their lives. “You were made by God and for God – and until you understand that, life will never make sense” (Warren, 2002, p. 19). The mentoring process can help people frame their past experiences and their present circumstances, and discover their life’s purpose. Using the personal life map can be a process through which an individual might gain perspective and look ahead with hope. In designing my mentoring sessions, I wanted to use this tool because it provides a great visual picture. Seeing your life as a journey or a story helps in personal understanding and then communicating your life experiences to others. “Stories are the way you capture your experiences in a form that you can understand and that you can communicate to others” (George, McClean & Craig, 2008, p. 6).

Building on the framework of understanding life as a journey, I also wanted to incorporate a wholistic approach to the mentoring process. Our lives are integrated and each aspect of our lives affects the others. Joan Chittister (1990) helped framed my thinking about this approach to life in her book *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily* where she states,

My life is like that [speaking about light penetrating through all the separate windows in the chapel]. All of its separate segments cry for my total attention. It is only the continual awareness that comes from the development of a perspective on life that is broader and deeper than any of them that convinces me that no one of them alone is worth it (p. 79).

Seeing our life journey through each of the lenses; spiritual, relational, emotional, intellectual, and physical helps to chart growth in each area and see an interconnection of all of the pieces.

Ultimately, this awareness will produce balance, which allows us to function to our fullest capacity.

In the process of learning how to create a mentoring culture in an organizational setting, Lois Zachary shared some wisdom that can also be applied to an individual mentoring situation. For me, some of the most applicable insights came from her discussion of accountability. “Accountability requires shared intention, shared responsibility and ownership, and shared commitment to action and consistency of practice” (Zachary, 2005, p. 108). In order for a mentoring relationship to be successful both the mentor and mentee need to be committed to the process. “Without shared accountability, it is nigh unto impossible for an organization to effectively achieve its vision and create the positive energy necessary to get desired results” (Zachary, 2005, p. 109). This is also true for an individual mentoring relationship. Without this shared commitment the level of fulfillment, the potential for sustainability, and the success of the outcomes will be compromised. The concept of accountability also involves “setting goals, clarifying expectations, defining roles and responsibilities, monitoring progress and measuring results, gathering feedback, and formulating action goals” (Zachary, 2005, p.108). Each of these steps is important to the individual mentoring process. The mentor and mentee must set goals and define what they want to get out of the relationship. They need to understand the perimeters of the relationship and clarify expectations. There must be a means to measure progress and opportunities to give feedback about the process. Finally the lessons learned need to be acted on and applied. Even though Zachary’s concept about developing a mentoring culture have value for the individual mentoring process, translating those from the large organization to an individual setting can be challenging. Gaining a clear understanding of the individual

relationship first, before trying to translate that to a larger organizational setting, would have been more beneficial for me in learning about mentoring.

This experience of developing a structured mentoring relationship has expanded my overall view of the mentoring process. I have come to highly value authenticity in leadership and see the importance of this particularly in mentoring relationships but also in developing a mentoring culture in an organization. Even though I have always valued the concept of mentoring, I have gained a clearer understanding of its potential for impact. “Because mentoring combines the impact of learning with the compelling human need for connection, it leaves individuals better able to deepen their personal capacity and maintain organizational vitality in the face of continuous challenge and change” (Zachary, 2005, p. xxi). What is true on the organizational level is also true on the individual level. Mentoring helps people deepen their capacity but clarifying their purpose and direction. It helps maintain personal vitality in an environment of continuous challenge and change. As a leader and a student of leadership development, it is my responsibility and calling to help equip those around me to perform to their fullest capacity, and to be able to meet the challenges and changes they will inevitably face. Therefore developing my understanding and skills as a mentor is vital to enhancing my effectiveness as a leader.

So often, in a learning situation, the more you begin to discover, the more you understand how much more there is for you to learn. This was certainly my experience with this mentoring project. There were some significant personal discoveries for me during this process. I learned the importance of the mentee’s motivation and level of commitment to the process. In my situation, my mentee was not seeking a mentor/mentee relationship, but I had approached her with the idea. There were several things that contributed to her not continuing in the

relationship, but certainly her level of motivation could have been a contributing factor.

“Mentoring at its fullest, is a self-directed learning relationship driven by the learning needs of the mentee” (Zachary, 2005, p. 3). In a mentoring relationship it is critical that the mentee at least contributes to the initiating of the relationship. Being sensitive to the personal needs of the mentee is also vitally important to the success of the relationship. Because of the nature of the assignment, I wholeheartedly pursued the structural format to our sessions. However, in this situation, I think the structure became overwhelming to my mentee. In hindsight, I think it would have been more beneficial to establish a certain amount of trust and vulnerability in our relationship before imposing so much structure into our sessions. This can probably vary, based on the individuals needs, but in my situation, less structure and more conscious listening could have eluted this problem.

During this process, I also discovered several areas that I need additional growth in. I need to learn to balance my need to impart wisdom and understanding with having a deeper concern for what a mentee might be experiencing or needing. Taking the time to tune in is more important than sticking with the structure. Preparation is crucial, but once a well thought through plan is initiated, the flexibility to veer from that plan is equally important. I also learned there needs to be a sense of humility when approaching a mentoring relationship and the agenda cannot be my own. Mentoring is not about the mentor, their need to be needed, their need to be influential or their need to be in control. Instead, mentoring needs to reflect the heart of Christ where relationships are anchored in godly discernment, Christ-like compassion and a genuine desire to touch individual lives with God’s love. Henri Nouwen’s (1989) challenge to Christian leaders, in his book *In the Name of Jesus* is highly applicable to mentoring relationships. He challenges us by saying,

Jesus asks us to move from a concern for relevance to a life of prayer, from worries about popularity to communal and mutual ministry, and from a leadership built on power to a leadership in which we critically discern where God is leading us and our people (p. 91-92).

I want to adapt Zachary's broader perspective on the potential of mentoring relationships. "In its wider scope, mentoring ultimately enriches humanity by helping people connect to a higher purpose that has the potential to change the world" (Zachary, 2005, p. 261). I want to have that kind of impact in leadership through mentoring relationships.

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