

# Passing It On: LCF's Mentoring Programme

*"How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."*

Psalm 119: 9-11

## 1. What Is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a dynamic relationship of trust whereby a mentor regularly meets with a mentee to encourage the mentee to maximize his or her potential. Mentoring is a Biblical concept through which committed followers of Jesus Christ can be equipped and strengthened to further His Kingdom.

The Bible is rich with examples of mentoring relationships:

- Jesus taught, encouraged and invested in His disciples. Jesus knew that in order for the Church to grow, He needed to train leaders to disciple others; that's why He commissioned them (and us) to "make disciples of all nations" (*Matthew 28:19*).
- Naomi mentored Ruth, and supported her as God's plan was revealed for her life.
- Elisha was Elijah's mentee: "*So Elijah went from there and found Elisha, son of Shaphat...then he (Elisha) set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant*" (*1 Kings 19:19-21*).
- The Apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to follow his example and to pass on what he had been taught to reliable men (*2 Timothy 2:2*).

The 'pass it on principle' is one of the central tenets of mentoring. Biblical mentoring strengthens the body of Christ developing mature, Christ-centred, Bible-focused Christians who will be prepared and equipped to serve God's purposes wholeheartedly.

## 2. Defining the Roles of Mentor/Mentee

### 2.1 Role of the Mentor

"The crucial thing about mentoring is the ability to ask questions and listen, rather more than tell people what they should do. It is very important to remember that the mentor is there to facilitate the thinking of the mentee, rather than provide the solution."<sup>1</sup>

Mentoring will primarily be driven by the mentee's needs. The mentee will be asking questions and seeking to attain personal and spiritual goals. In a sense, the mentor will be called to draw upon his or her life experience and assist in any way they can, asking questions to help the mentee think through issues for themselves, and to find solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> William Baron, *11 Steps to Successful Mentoring*: [www.creatinginsight.co.uk](http://www.creatinginsight.co.uk) (Accessed on 17/01/08).

Specific tasks include:

- Keeping the mentee accountable (especially if they are leading a SYL Group);
- Encouraging the mentee;
- Challenging the mentee;
- Setting 'homework' for the mentee where appropriate;
- Being available by e-mail or telephone to respond to any queries that a mentee might have.

Please note, however, that it is *not* the mentor's primary role to address pastoral/counseling issues that are best addressed under the authority of a local church; mentors should use their discretion wisely in this regard, referring a mentee back to his or her local church as the mentor deems appropriate.

## 2.2 Role of the Mentee

It is the mentee's responsibility to ensure that meetings run effectively. The mentee should suggest the topics he or she wishes to discuss. Such areas may include:

- Personal Bible study and prayer;
- Areas of weakness/need for accountability;
- Identifying areas of strength/gifts;
- Identifying how those gifts can be used and improved;
- Hopes for the future and analysis of how those hopes are being achieved.

It is suggested that the mentee should keep a journal to document all the sessions. This is important to the process of learning and review.

## 2.3 Journal

Ideally, mentees should complete a journal every time they meet with their mentor. This is an excellent way of tracking progress. Although, each mentee will have a different way of recording the sessions, the following may be useful:

- Development - what are my gifts and how are they being developed?
- Discipline - how is my discipline in terms of how I use my time/diet/exercise?
- Dreams - what are my God-given aspirations for my life?
- Devotions - how are my personal devotions? What has God been teaching me?

# 3. The Mentoring Programme: Chronology of Events

## 3.1 The Selection Process

The SYL Department will review all applications and determine the suitability of candidates. Suitability will be determined by:

- Sex (male – male; female – female)
- Spiritual maturity;
- Involvement with LCF;
- Involvement with local church;
- Church denomination;

- Area(s) of practice/interest;
- Barrister/Solicitor; and
- Location.

All mentors should be approved by the SYL Committee.

Candidates will then be chosen and put together in a mentor/mentee relationship.

If mentees already have mentors (in a local church or elsewhere) preference will be given to those without mentors.

### 3.2 Notification of Selection

The potential mentor will be contacted first by telephone and thanked for applying to take part in the programme. He/She will be briefly informed about their potential mentee and made aware that the mentee will be contacting them to arrange a first meeting. The mentor will be asked if he/she has any reservations at this stage before the mentee is contacted.

The potential mentee will be subsequently contacted by telephone and thanked for applying to take part in the programme. He/She will be briefly informed about their potential mentor, given their contact details and made aware that he/she will need to contact their mentor by email to arrange the first meeting.

A confirmation email will be sent to both mentor and mentee, with a standard mentoring agreement attached.

### 3.3 The First Meeting

The first meeting should be initiated by the mentee. The aim of this meeting is for the mentor and mentee to determine whether a mentoring relationship between them will work; both mentor and mentee are free not to pursue the relationship at this stage. A suggested format for a first meeting:

- Open with a time of prayer;
- Mentor and mentee read through the mentoring agreement together;
- Mentor initiates conversation asking the mentee about testimony, interests, hobbies, family;
- Mentee should then begin to discuss hopes for the mentoring programme/identify specific needs and goals;
- Arrange a date by which mentor and mentee should indicate whether they are willing to commit to the mentoring relationship;
- Close with prayer.

If the mentor and mentee get on well almost immediately, a second meeting should be arranged and a copy of the mentoring agreement signed and returned to the SYL Department.

If after the first meeting either the mentor or mentee are not comfortable continuing the relationship, they should contact the SYL Department, who, depending on the circumstances, will try again to initiate a suitable mentoring relationship for both parties.

### 3.4 The Mentoring Agreement

Both mentor and mentee will be asked to read through and sign a mentoring agreement. This is intended to ensure that both mentor and mentee commence the mentoring relationship with the right expectations. A signed copy of the agreement should be sent to the SYL Department, 6-8 Marshalsea Road, London, SE1 1HL.

In the mentoring agreement, mentors and mentees are required to agree the length of time, (ideally in four month intervals: 8, 12 or 16 months) for which they are committed to meeting.

### 3.5 Meetings

Meetings should take place once a month, and be held at a convenient venue for mentor and mentee. The venue should be relatively quiet, where there will be time and space to reflect, ask questions and pray.

It has been known for some mentors to join their mentee in a hobby. This could be a good way to meet informally in addition to meeting once a month. Meetings should be well-structured, but flexible enough to deal with matters arising. If a meeting has to be cancelled, a mutually convenient date should be arranged.

### 3.6 Honest Reflection

It is crucial to emphasise that the mentoring programme will only work if mentors and mentees are prepared to be honest with each other. If matters are discussed on a purely superficial level, no-one will benefit. Honest reflection must be at the very heart of mentoring.

### 3.7 If the Mentoring Relationship Is Not Working

The mentoring relationship can be terminated at any time if either of the participants feels that the relationship is proving unworkable. In such circumstances the SYL Department should be contacted.

Inappropriate or offensive behavior should be immediately reported to the SYL Department.

If a mentoring relationship is not working, the SYL Department will, depending on the circumstances and accordance with its discretion, will try again to initiate a suitable mentoring relationship for both parties. This may not always be possible, however, and in the event a second mentoring relationship breaking down, the SYL Department will review the issue, and may decide not to implement a third mentoring relationship.

### 3.8 Review

It is advisable that each mentoring relationship should be reviewed, after 2 weeks, 1 month, 3 months, and every subsequent four months over an 8-16 month period. A member of the SYL Department will contact every mentee and mentor (by email/telephone) on the above dates to review the mentoring relationship, ensure that the programme is working properly and to address any difficulties that may have arisen.