

# Mentor Training Outline

Adapted from “The Complete Guide to Marriage Mentoring”

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**Optional Recourse: [www.RealRelationships.com](http://www.RealRelationships.com)**

## **Intro:**

Don't have to have all the answers or be the perfect couple to make a difference.

Marriage mentoring belongs to the laity.

Another couple knew what we were going through and yet remained objective at the same time.

## **Part 1 -- Chapter 1**

All mentors share the ability to listen and encourage.

Roles Mentors play:

- Giving timely information to mentorees
- Modeling aspects of what they wish to impart
- Challenging and motivating mentorees to move to higher levels
- Directing mentorees to helpful resources when needed
- Encouraging goodness and inspiring greatness
- Lessening mentorees' anxiety by normalizing experiences
- Helping mentorees set goals
- Keeping mentorees accountable to their goals
- Providing a periodic review and evaluation of mentorees performance

Note: Mentors can do all of the above and still be ineffective.

Mentoree must be willing and ready to learn from the mentor. Must have connection.

Definition of a Mentor -- a relatively happy, more experienced couple purposefully investing in another couple to effectively navigate a journey that they have already taken.

Both mentors and mentorees need to discuss their initial expectations of the relationship.

**Mentors:**

- Willingly share what they know (in a noncompetitive way)
- Represent skill, knowledge, virtue and accomplishment because they have gone before the couple they are mentoring
- Take a personal and heartfelt interest in the other couple's development and well-being
- Offer support, challenge, patience and enthusiasm while guiding other couples to new levels of competence
- Point the way and represent tangible evidence of what another couple can become.
- Expose the mentorees to new ideas, perspectives and standards
- Have more expertise in terms of knowledge yet views themselves as equal to those they mentor.

**What a mentor is not:**

- A parent (either mother or father)
- A pal or buddy
- "On call"
- A professor
- A know-it-all

The purpose of marriage mentoring is to lovingly invest in the preparation, maximization, and restoration of lifelong marriages by walking alongside couples who are less experienced than their mentors.

Crucial to the success of the relationship is that the more experienced couple has traveled a road similar to the one the less experienced couple is traveling.

It is the hunger of the younger that provides the energy, pace, and direction of the relationship.

**Chapter 2**

Traits of effective mentors:

- Warmth -- respect for them as human beings despite what they put on the table. Mentors must respect and accept.
- Genuineness -- authenticity
- Empathy -- set aside your own interests to zero in on what's best of the mentorees. Truly interested in them.

**Caution Flags for those volunteering to mentor:**

- Addictions

- Uncontrollable emotional outbursts
- Recently suffered significant setback (financial, emotional, etc.)
- Own marriage is not stable or fraught with frequent conflict
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- Trying to find healing from serious emotional wounds
- Struggling with significant financial debt.
- Both spouses need to be in an emotional healthy place to be effective.

*Marriage Mentoring Self-Test -- page 41*

### **Chapter 3**

Common Mistakes of new mentors:

- Premature problem solving -- major on listening
- Setting limits -- set personal limits and agreed upon ending time
- Fear of Silence -- become comfortable with silence and maintain eye contact
- Interrogation -- don't barrage your couple with questions. Make open-ended statements about what your hearing.
- Impatience -- recognize most improvement is gradual and often slow. Transformation in the mind takes time. Mentorees who are rushed into making rapid changes will be set up for further failure.
- Moralizing -- goal is to understand not condemn. When they feel accepted like they are they're more willing to change.
- Reluctant to refer -- referral part of marriage mentoring work.

Fear of failure is one of the greatest obstacles. Every mentor will make mistakes. Be patient with yourself.

### **Chapter 4**

Mentoring will rejuvenate your marriage.

When you do good for another couple you've almost sure to receive more good in return.

### **Part 2 -- Chapter 5**

**Marriage Triad:**

*Maximizing -- deepening and enriching stable marriages*

*Preparing -- Building solid foundations for engaged and newlywed couples*

## ***Repairing -- Encouraging couples in discussion***

### **Preparing:**

#### Predictable Issues for Engaged and Newlywed Couples

- Establishing marital roles and responsibilities through negotiation and adjusting expectations,
- Providing emotional fulfillment and support for each other by learning how to give and receive love and affection
- Adjusting personal habits such as sleep patterns, spending behavior and so on
- Negotiating gender roles that reflect individual personalities, skills, needs, interests, values, and equity
- Making sexual adjustments with each other by learning how to physically discover mutual pleasure and satisfaction
- Establishing family and employment priorities by learning to balance and negotiate
- Developing effective communication skills that allow resolution to conflicts
- Managing budgetary and financial matters
- Establishing relationships with extended family and managing to set boundaries between their marriage and family of origin
- Participating in the larger community by making friends with other married couples and being involved in the community.

### **Chapter 6**

The greatest enemy to a great marriage is a good marriage. That's why so few couples in a good marriage aspire to something better.

*Supplemental Material: Love Talk -- dedicated to communication issues*

Laughter is crucial to mentors wanting to move a marriage from good to great.

Lasting change happens slowly. Mentoring couples from good to great is a process.

### **Chapter 7**

The marriage mentors who are coming alongside couples in crisis or distress should have experienced this crisis before them.

#### **Potential Issues:**

- Battling Addictions
- Surviving Infidelity
- Coping with Infertility
- Dealing with Loss

- Financial Crisis

### **Part 3 -- Chapter 8**

Rapport in a mentoring relationship is built and sustained on conveying personal warmth.

Criteria for building Rapport:

- Identify with Your Mentorees
- Establish Credibility with your Mentorees
- Monitoring your interest in your Mentorees

### **Chapter 9**

Empathy in the Bible is called compassion. The essence of a New Testament compassion is recognition of and concern for another's need and appropriate action to meet that need.

Empathy involves both your head and your heart.

You have to see the world from their perspective but also need to step out of your emotions so you can be objective.

### **Chapter 10**

Mentors need to work as a team by:

- Understanding your unique strengths
- Empower each other's voice
- Embrace your differences

### **Chapter 11**

Need to be proactive about where you'd like to be as two couples in a mentoring relationship when you have completed your work. Be very specific.

Springboard for setting goals: Have mentorees make a list of 6 things they wish were different. Do this assignment separately and then compare notes. Use this as a springboard for setting goals.

Goals need to be measurable and attainable.

Pray together as individual couples as well as when you get together.

Set parameters -- time for session, location, total time to sessions, how often, etc.

### **Chapter 12**

Ask open-ended meaningful questions.

Quality questions invite vulnerability but are not invasive. Mentors do most of the questions and reflecting on the responses.

Don't ask rhetorical questions

### **Chapter 13**

Listening and effective feedback is essential for every marriage mentor.

Training in active listening -- *Couples Communication*

The marriage mentor's goal is not to be depended upon. Mentoring isn't rescuing.

### **Chapter 14**

Marriage mentors aren't expected to have "all the answers."

Simply be you.

Keep advice to a minimum.

Responses to questions for the mentor: "Before we tell you, what do you think"

### **Chapter 15**

One of your primary tools for guiding mentorees is your own story but it requires vulnerability.

Your vulnerability begets their vulnerability.

### **Chapter 16**

Praying with and for your mentorees is important.

Mentors set the example by praying for each other.

Every couple will have their own style for praying together.

### **Chapter 17**

Your mentoring can only be as good as you are.

Mentors should be growing as a couple through books, prayer, weekends away alone, marriage conferences and recreation together.

You can only take another couple as far as you have traveled yourselves.

### **Chapter 18**

Mentors need to be themselves, genuine, comfortable in their own skin, and be authentic.

Authentic mentors are honest about their imperfections, problems, inadequacies and pain.

Drop your personal agenda and let go of immediate results.

Even with a lot of errors you can still mentor very effectively.

## Mentoring Principles

1. The mentor's role is praying not fixing.
  - a. Real heart change comes from God only.
  - b. When I pray, I am asking for God's wisdom
2. The mentor's role is listening not blaming.
  - a. Prov. 18:13 – Answering before listening is both stupid and rude.
  - b. The best mentors are not good talkers, they are good listeners.
  - c. Gal. 6:2 – Bear one another's burdens.
3. The mentor's role is asking not preaching.
  - a. Asking a well-worded question is more valuable than throwing Bible verses at them.
  - b. Prov. 20:5 – The purpose in a man's heart is like deep waters, but a man of understanding will draw it out.
4. The mentor's role is to consider not to rescue.
  - a. Isaiah 1:18 – Come let us reason together.
  - b. We are inviting the mentee to think about Biblical truth.
5. The mentor's role is to encourage not carry.
  - a. We are not there to take responsibility for the mentee's behavior but the encourage them along the right path.
  - b. 1Thes. 5:11 – Encourage one another and build one another up.