

West Indies Union

YOUTH DEPARTMENT



Mentoring Manual

2001 - 2005

MESSAGE FROM THE UNION PRESIDENT

I wholeheartedly support and endorse the launching of the mentoring programme, by the Youth Ministries Department of this Union. The emergence of this programme is indeed timely, as the need for guidance is truly an imperative for today's youth. There are various biblical examples that endorse the concept of mentoring.

This vision of the Youth Department can only result in more vibrant, cohesive and effective Adventist Youth across this Union being nurtured for the Kingdom and empowered to fulfill the mission of the Church.

I trust that this programme will be implemented and fully supported by the leaders at all levels of this Union.

Patrick Allen

President

MESSAGE FROM THE YOUTH DIRECTOR

Ellen White says that every blessing the Father hath provided for those of more mature experience has been provided for children and youth through Jesus Christ." It is into that never ending reservoir of blessings that this mentoring programme is tapping, in order that our inexperienced and maturing youth may be throughly furnished.

Firm, deliberate, friendly, and spiritual guidance of our youth is the object of this programme. Thanks to Dr. Althea McMillan for her insight and evangelistic wisdom.

With the whole hearted cooperation of our Conference Administration, Youth Directors, Pastors, Elders, Youth Leaders, Adults and Youth, this programme will build; relationships, Christian people, stem attrition rate, and nurture for the Kingdom of God.

Let us work it!

Balvin B. Braham

Youth Director

Message from the Mentoring Consultant

Church leaders, as well as leaders in private and government enterprises, often forget their mortality, and do precious little to guarantee a "**seamless succession**." These leaders seem unaware of the personal, professional and community tragedy that results when "**cadres of potential successors**" are not mentored to ensure growth and continuity of effective programmes. Pastor Leslie Holmes, refers to this deliberate training of future leaders as "**leaving your lights on.**"

I congratulate Pastor Braham, Youth Director and the West Indies Union Conference for launching the Mentoring Programme in each constituency. So many, even non-christians now embrace mentoring, a programme which gives young people more than book learning. It is a visionary programme that allows older, experienced persons to be instructors, guides, coaches, and encouragers. It allows us to demonstrate our love for God by loving those around us - touching, caring, sharing.

Church leaders at all levels must understand that Christianity is **not** an argument, or a performance. Rather it is an experience. The Christian must "**be**" - kind, warm, generous, and gracious. Giving all in service to others as Jesus did.

We each need love and nurturing. And many of your youth will find their rightful places in the church and society through an effective mentoring programme. God bless you as you "**reach out and touch.**"

Althea L. McMillan, Provost

Northern Caribbean University

(Formerly West Indies College)

TOWARD A DEFINITION

The Mentoring Programme is designed to help young people grow spiritually, improve academic achievement, increase self-esteem, develop self confidence, gain knowledge, and

develop interpersonal skills. This programme will help our young mentees to:

- Discover their strengths and skills and build upon them
- Gain self-respect through recognition and acquisition of new skills
- Increase knowledge and use of church, education and community resources
- Improve their abilities to set and achieve life goals
- Recognize the link between church and the world of work
- Help strengthen a personal faith in Christ and loyalty to our Church

A one-to-one relationship with a caring and concerned individual is often the critical link for young people in learning to avoid and deal with problems. It is also an appropriate

way to involve them in appropriate, meaningful, health activities.

WHAT MAKES YOU A GOOD MENTOR?

The best mentors are people who are enthusiastic about youth welfare, the Church and God. They have highly developed interpersonal skills. Sharing these interest and skills with young people is just the beginning.

However, the ultimate goal of mentoring is to encourage the total growth of younger, less experienced people whose needs and interests are your primary consideration. What you

do and how you do it will depend on your youth mentee and the type of relationship you establish.

MENTOR ROLES AND EXPECTATIONS

Your youth mentee will see you in various ways. Listed below are some ways in which youth find mentors to be helpful.

COMPANION

- Shares interests and experiences
- Enjoy time spent with mentee

ROLE MODEL

- Admired by mentee
- Possesses qualities and values mentee desires
- Christ-like character

TEACHER

- Imparts information, knowledge and skills
- Participates in the learning
- Demonstrates how to do things
- Demonstrates the importance of Matthew 28:18-20, the great gospel commission

RESOURCE

- Provides opportunities to try new things
- Introduces mentee to new people, ideas, values, interests or cultures
- Provides access to and encourages mentee to check out new information sources

MOTIVATOR

- Promotes goal setting and helps mentee to achieve goals
- Prods mentee to try new activities
- Gives constructive feedback
- Encourages independent thinking and action

FRIEND

- Demonstrates warmth and caring mentee
- Respects mentee's talents and interests
- Listens to mentee's problems and concerns
- Believes in mentee's abilities

MENTORING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All mentors are expected to act in ways that encourage the mentee to grow positively and to display responsible behaviour. Most of your activities will focus on constructive and shared interests. However, there may be times when your mentee wished to discuss certain issues that cause concern or involve risk taking. If this happens, pat yourself on the back. You've established the kind of relationship we hoped for and you have a real opportunity to help your mentee grow. Remember, too, that this may be a test of your patience and values.

While you may not expose your mentee to situations that involve sexual behaviour, alcohol or drug use, you may certainly discuss these issues.

As a mentor, take the position of a caring friend. Do not preach. Let the mentee lead the conversation and encourage him or her to think the issue through. Ask questions like: "What do you think would happen?" or "How would this affect your life?" Share your own experiences. Suggest that the two of you find additional sources of information. Do not try to be a counsellor unless you have been professionally trained. Recommend professional counselling as provided by the Pastor or Professionally Trained Counsellor, when your mentee needs their service.

All communications are to be kept strictly confidential. In order to develop the type of relationship in which you can be effective, you must first be perceived as trustworthy. The only exception to this is if you feel that the mentee is being physically abused, neglected or is involved in a life-threatening activity. Report this act at once to the designated mentor coordinator who will take appropriate action.

Keep your promise to your mentee. These young people are too familiar with adults who are not consistent in their words or actions. Your role is to demonstrate that adults can and do keep promises. Follow-through is critical to establishing trust. Set up a system for communicating with your mentee. If for some reason you must miss a meeting, notify your mentee as soon as possible before the meeting. Reschedule immediately. In an emergency situation, you may contact the designated mentor coordinator who will relay the message.

Another alternative is to find a friend who will stand in for you. Make sure that you introduce the mentee to this substitute first and involve him or her in at least one prior activity. Encourage each mentee to become involved in small group activities, prayer, and Bible Study.

Encourage your mentee to keep his or her promises to you. By scheduling meetings in advance you help the mentee develop a sense of responsibility. Mentees will be informed of their responsibilities to you and to the programme. They will also be instructed in how to contact you should it become to cancel a meeting. If for any reason you suspect there is a problem because of frequent scheduling conflicts, notify the designated mentor coordinator who will find out if a problem exists and take steps to correct it. Mentees

have made a commitment to the programme just like you and we expect them to live up their agreements. The mentor's primary responsibility is to the mentee. You are in this programme to supplement a young persons experiences and opportunities. You are not expected to take on the parental role or undermine parental authority. In order to better understand his or her needs, you may even want to ask the parent(s) what their hopes and dreams are for the child and how they think you can help fulfill those dreams.

You are not encouraged to play "fairy godmother or godfather" to the mentee. You may introduce yourself by letter to meet the mentees parents/guardians. The object of the problem is to be a friend. Gifts are strongly discouraged. It is fine to feed the mentee if you deem it appropriate. Birthday or Christmas gifts are permitted. We do not want to encourage competition among mentees for gifts. If your mentee starts asking you for gifts, we ask you to discourage this behaviour. Should it persist, contact the designated mentor coordinator.

What do you do if you or your mentee are not compatible? Unfortunately, not all matches are on target. If after five to six weeks of consistent activity you and your mentee seem to conflict, it may be necessary to make a change and pray for divine intervention. Please remember that the relationship will take time to establish. Should you experience discomfort with your mentee, please contact the designated mentor coordinator team early. We may be able to help both of you. If not, we will make other arrangements.

Regular communication is important. In order to monitor the mentor-mentee relationship, we require you to submit brief bi-weekly reports to your coordinator!! Report forms will be provided. You may send them to the designated mentor coordinator twice monthly. The Coordinator will also call you periodically to help with assistance in any way possible.

MENTOR EXPECTATIONS

- Show interest in the mentee's social & spiritual progress.
- Encourage responsible behaviour by mentee.
- Be a role model.
- Invite joint decision making.
- Encourage mentee to practice new skills.
- Give constructive feedback.
- Provide positive reinforcement.
- Encourage self-motivation.
- Help mentee understand realities about education, church and work.
- Discuss mentee's concerns and problems.
- Share life experiences and wisdom.
- Pray for mentee.
- Have fun!
- Encourage the mentee to be involved in Church Activities eg; Pathfinder, Adventurer, Master Guide, A.Y. Programmes, Community Services, Health, etc.

- Encourage the mentee to attend church services; eg. Sunday and Wednesday night meetings, Sabbath services, etc.
- Help mentee to handle peer pressure.
- Assure mentee of your love, support and interest in his/her well being.

YOUTH'S DESCRIPTION OF A MENTOR

- Someone who keeps in touch regularly with me.
- Someone do to a lot of things with.
- Someone who cares.
- Someone who is always there and can make me feel secure.
- Someone who fosters open communication with me: discussing more than school, work, or church.
- Someone who is like a Big Brother or Big Sister and can give me advice.
- Someone who listens to my problems.
- Someone who can be a role model in "everything".
- Someone who is willing to share some personal information about what it was like for them growing up.
- Someone to have fun with.
- Someone who follows through their promises.
- Someone who doesn't try to change me.
- Someone who feels comfortable with me and with whom I feel comfortable.

TIPS FOR MENTORS

The Director coordinates the mentoring programme; therefore, it is your responsibility to keep the designated mentor coordinator notified and informed at all times as to the health and quality of your relationship with your mentee.

If you have any questions of any type or degree, or if you feel uncomfortable about something, immediately contact the designated mentor coordinator and freely discuss your concerns with him or her.

Please provide a report on the status of the relationship and activities with your mentee as required, at least every fortnight.

A mentor is neither parent, disciplinarian, nor baby-sitter.

Be firm with your mentee when it is required. The mentee may not have had limits set for him or her before, and your firm, understanding guidance could be a great deal of help.

Remember, what you are speaks louder than what you say. While you are with your mentee, act towards him or her as you would like to have the mentee act towards others.

Maintain periodic contacts with the designated mentor coordinator and rely on him or her when questions or problems may arise.

Allow your relationship with your mentee to develop spontaneously. Do not force or formalize it.

Do not become overly involved with the parent or guardian. The mentee should never be forced to "compete" with his or her family for your attention.

Get involved with your mentee's entire life. If the mentee has problem areas, such as family or school, help the mentee by counseling and give him or her advice whenever possible.

Be a good listener. Encourage the mentee to share his or her hopes, dreams, problems, and fears with you. Do this gently to avoid appearing to be prying.

Respect the mentee's privacy. Make sure the mentee knows whatever she or he confides in you stays with you. If you ever feel that you should report something to a responsible professional in the mentee's best interest, ask the mentee for commission to do so. If the mentee refuses, and you still feel obligated to report it, consult with the designated mentor coordinator and arrive at a joint decision.

Be aware of your mentee's needs-such as medical care, recreation studies, etc. Help the mentee utilize the existing resources in this regard. In these matters check with the designated mentor coordinator when there are problems or questions.

Join your mentee in activities, whenever possible, such as church events, educational and recreational programmes. Encourage the mentee to join available ... activities and support his or her making new friends and finding new directions.

Do not make impossible promises nor pressure your mentee to do so. Set specific, realistic goals: improving Sabbath School and church attendance, improving school work, learning acceptable behaviour, and finding solutions to health and human services needs. Developing stronger relationship with God through Bible study and prayer.

YOU DO NOT carry a legal or financial responsibility for your mentee.

ADDITIONAL REMINDERS

- Meet the mentee or mentees in a friendly, relaxed manner. You are a friend with skills, interests, and time, who wants to share and nurture.
- Your attitude is the most important factor in setting up a good atmosphere. Take time to listen and learn. Be courteous and respectful. Let your mentee know you expect them to be courteous and to do well.

BE YOURSELF!

- Get to know and like your mentee.
- Pronounce the mentee's name correctly.
- Write your name down on an index card for your mentee.
- Show interest in your mentee. Take each session to talk about what your mentee had done since you last met.
- Share yourself with your mentee.
- Let your mentee know you are human and that you make mistakes also.
- Accompany mentees on field trips whenever possible.
- Keep a profile on each mentee.
- Let your mentee know if you are unable to attend a scheduled session. Since many students have or are prone to attendance problems, they will be watching you closely to see if you "show up."
- When your mentee is late or absent, let him know that you missed him and that you look forward to each session.
- Listen carefully and pay close attention. Give the mentee the opportunity to communicate. Encourage the mentee to do as much as possible. The most important goal is to build self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Patronizing or talking down to the mentee is not acceptable. Sarcasm and embarrassment have no place in mentoring.
- Keep in touch with your mentee's academic, social and spiritual progress. Give advice and assist with academic and financial planning as necessary. Insist on the maintenance of each mentee's progress report.

COMMUNICATION TECHNIQUES

Communication is one of the most wonderful skills in the world. Yet, we've all experienced difficulty in understanding others and being understood. Below you will find some techniques that may help you start a dialogue between you and your mentee. These will also ensure that you understand what your mentee is telling you.

Encouraging Dialogue

Invite the mentee to talk.

"Would you like to talk about it?"

"I'll listen whenever you want to talk."

Acknowledge mentee's feelings.

"You seem (upset, sad, angry) about something."

"You don't seem to feel well."

Share what you feel.

"I find it hard to know what to say when I first meet someone"

"I'm a little concerned about my (job, family, studies) today."

If You Feel You Need More Information

Draw out the mentee.

"How would you do that?"

"Can you share why you did that?"

"What do you like (most, least) about this?"

"Could you tell me more?"

"How does that make you feel?"

Use Nonverbal Techniques

Establish soft eye contact (direct, but not a glare).

Be silent and wait for mentee to continue.

Nod and smile.

Find a quiet place to converse.

Face mentee and lean forward slightly.

BE HONEST in your approach and attitude. It will aid in developing interest.

Listening Without Giving Approval or Offering Solutions

BE PATIENT when working with students. They are struggling with their own growth and difficulties with school and/or home.

Ask leading questions that encourage the mentee to think.

"What would happen if you did that?"

"What do you think you could do in this situation?"

"What's the (best, worst) that could happen?"

"How would you handle this situation?"

"How would you feel?"

BE FLEXIBLE in responding to the needs of students.

BE FRIENDLY with a smile and a thank you, you can accomplish miracles.

Respond neutrally. Do not approve or disapprove

BE RESPECTFUL treat individuals in the same manner you wish to be treated.

"That's one way. What's another?"

"How would your (best friend, parents, teacher) react?"

"What do you think is the best way to handle this?"

Ensuring That You Understand What Is Said or Felt

Restate what the mentee said in your own words.

"Did you mean that ..."

"What did I hear you say ..."

"Do you think that ..."

Look for clues. Check:

Tone of voice

Facial expression

Body language

Gestures

When the Conversation Stops Abruptly

Review your actions. Did you:

Change the subject?

Indicate disapproval or dislike by your facial expression or body language?

Misread how the mentee felt?

Respond to how the mentee felt?

To restate the dialogue

Ask if you upset the mentee.

Share a similar situation in your life.

Ask if he or she would like to continue the discussion.

Express your appreciation of the mentee's trust.