

ReadMe: Instructions and Notes

Mentoring a Returning Citizen

WELS Prison Ministry

Overview:

Mentoring a Returning Citizen is a training program with two major elements, a workbook and videos for each lesson in the workbook. The goal of the training is to equip laypeople for:

- Evaluating their fitness for mentoring a returning citizen (former inmate)
- Getting started as a mentor to a returning citizen.

Even for people who ultimately decide to not pursue this type of mentoring, much of the information shared and skills taught can be useful in other settings.

These notes provide valuable information for using the resource and adapting it to various situations and environments. We strongly recommend that potential trainees, whether individuals or groups, as well as potential training group facilitators, consider this information and identify how best to use the training materials, including possibly customizing the training to get the most out of the experience.

Format and Setting

The nine videos vary in length as follows (excluding embedded pause locations to answer questions or perform learning activities that will add additional class time):

Video Lesson	Duration
Lesson 0 – Introduction	41:34
Lesson 1 – Learn About the Mentee in a General Way	1:03:30
Lesson 2 – Converse and Listen	1:05:20
Lesson 3 – Build a Relationship with the Mentee	1:41:36
Lesson 4 – Build an Action Plan You Both Agree On	56:38
Lesson 5 – Run Recurring Meetings with the Mentee	55:06
Lesson 5 – Role Play (additional material)	34:24
Lesson 6 – Hold the Mentee and Mentor Relationship Accountable	59:42
Lesson 7 – Assess Your Fit for This Type of Ministry	22:34

Although the videos closely follow the workbook, these elements are complementary. Participants are strongly urged to use both, including a hard copy of the workbook that can be marked up and has room for notes while watching the videos. Specifically, there are wide margins and a blank page at the end of each lesson for notes. Also notice that all the learning activities for each lesson are repeated at the end of each lesson to facilitate easier review later. Reading the workbook material either before or after viewing the video is largely a matter of participant preference, but each element contains valuable information that is not present in the other element.

Ideally, the training will work best as a group exercise with a facilitator. Some of the activities in the program involve working with a partner, so having multiple participants involved at the same time is beneficial. If technology allows, participants could be in more than one location (on a platform such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams) provided the participants can interact individually with another participant for some activities (e.g., in a Zoom break-out room). WELS Prison Ministry periodically will offer the training in a remote fashion with a facilitator for those who would like to participate in a group setting but have no local option. Contact Administrator Dave Hochmuth to express interest in such an opportunity.

Individuals may wish to do the training outside a group setting. While this is feasible and may be more convenient, the training experience may not be as beneficial. Some modifications of learning activities will be necessary and are suggested in the next section.

The video recording was done on two consecutive days, so if participants want an intensive training experience, that is an option. If participants have difficulty blocking out that much time, a weekly 1-2 hour training experience over 7 or 8 weeks is also a possibility.

Activity Suggestions and Modifications

Each lesson contains learning activities that enhance and extend the information presented to give the participants a deeper understanding of various principles of mentoring as well as give them an opportunity to begin to apply them. Though not explicitly stated, the instructions for the activity generally indicate whether portions of the activity can be done in a few minutes during a pause in the class or should be treated as “homework” and done outside of class. For example, some activities require internet research or analysis of an everyday activity which fit the homework description. If the participant is in a course with others that meets multiple times, the facilitator may wish to begin the session with a recap of the homework activities and have participants share what they learned.

Participants that use the material on their own can choose whether to do the activities while pausing the video, where possible (recommended because the material is fresh) or treat all the activities as homework. In cases where an activity requires a partner who has some knowledge of the course material, WELS Prison Ministry can seek to find a current mentor to consult with the trainee on these activities. Contact Administrator Dave Hochmuth for assistance.

The video segments indicate a suggested length of time to do (or at least start) the noted activities based on their complexity. Feel free to take additional time, if available, to have the participants discuss what they learned by doing the activities.

Final thoughts

Thank you for considering this vital, joyful, and fruitful ministry. Because Jesus is the one who will bless those who invest the time to explore and, Lord willing, become involved in mentoring, please begin and end each session with prayer asking him to do so. Contact WELS Prison Ministry if you have any questions or seek guidance with this material.

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Sharing Jesus with people impacted by incarceration