



Mentoring Program Overview

The purpose of the offender/ex-offender mentoring program is to provide a positive role model to a soon to be released, or recently released individual.

Important Note - the individuals you will be working with have made some very poor choices in their lives. Haven't we all. Our poor choices however, by God's grace, did not happen to be ones that broke the law. The men and women you will be working with are created in God's image, and loved by God, just as you are.

You are about to embark on a very exciting and sometimes difficult journey. The road to successful re-entry into the community is long and arduous. It is our hope and prayer that as you travel down this road with an ex-offender, that your own relationship with Christ will grow and be strengthened.

What does it take to be a mentor?

1. Adult, over 30, in good physical health. Men mentor men, and women mentor women;
2. Strength of character and non-judgmental;
3. Ability to say "no", and not be an enabler;
4. An active listener;
5. Not a fixer; (there is only One Savior, and you and I aren't the One);
6. Patience;
7. Ability to work with individuals of diverse backgrounds;
8. Valid driver's license and own transportation;
9. Time commitment of 12 to 18 months;
10. Not a proselytizer. While this is a faith-based, Christ-centered ministry, our primary focus is not conversion, that is the work of the Holy Spirit (See #5 above). We encourage our volunteers to share the Gospel as they feel led, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit is key. We seek to follow Christ's example. He never forced Himself onto anyone, likewise, we should not force Him onto anyone. Our actions are our witness.

What are a mentor's "job" duties?

1. Develop a positive relationship with an individual who is within 6 months of release by visiting them weekly or bi-weekly, and where applicable attending worship services with them in the facility. Within the scope of this relationship, act as a sounding board through active listening and by offering encouragement and support.
2. Facilitate the mentee's establishment of positive relationships in the community including inviting and encouraging the mentee to attend worship services.
3. While you are not the "police", it is very much in the mentee's best interest that you hold him or her accountable for acting in a responsible and appropriate manner. You model appropriate behavior by following the rules yourself.
4. Assist the mentee in developing a written transition plan. This is an invaluable tool, and one that is encouraged by Department of Correctional Services.
5. Meet the mentee at the front gate on the day of release.
6. Assist the mentee in finding needed resources within the community (e.g. housing, employment, food, clothing, household needs, additional support system). Direction to these resources is available through the Released and Restored ministry office.
7. Successful completion of the Mentor Training Program.

Mentor Training and Mentor Support

An 8 hour course that is provided by the Released and Restored. It includes the following:

Correctional systems overview, including draft of the transition plan; addiction recovery overview; criminal thinking patterns and prison mentality; mentor relationship development - tips and barriers; mentor accountability; and trouble-shooting.

On-going support will be provided to all mentors in the form of support group meetings, which mentors must attend once a month. As was previously stated, the road to successful re-entry is long and arduous. It is imperative that mentors have an opportunity to share their frustrations and successes with each other, and that they take advantage of these meetings.

Benefits To You the Mentor

Personal satisfaction of putting your faith into action by helping another human being. The opportunity to provide a unique service that not everyone is able to offer. Personal satisfaction in providing a much needed service to the community at large by helping to reduce crime and increase public safety - all at no cost to the taxpayers. Gaining a new friend.