

Could I be a Mentor? - CMF Mentoring Scheme through a Mentor's eyes

'I would love to support another Christian Doctor throughout their career;'

'I would love to use my gift of encouragement and get alongside another Christian and help them grow and live for the Lord;'

'I would love to know what to pray for another Christian Doctor;'

'I have had a Christian mentor and having experienced the benefit, I'd like to mentor someone.'

Have you had any of these thoughts? Or as you read them, do they resonate with you? (Even if for the first time). Or is this something that you have had on your heart but aren't sure how to get involved? Or perhaps you just haven't found a person to intentionally encourage-yet!



Would you consider being a mentor?

Maybe you have been through difficult experiences at work, as a Christian Doctor/Healthcare worker and have experienced God's guidance, comfort and presence - would you be willing to share what you have learned to encourage another? (1 Cor. 1. 3-4).

John Greenall in his Nucleus article on mentoring suggests that the foundations of mentoring are: a Christ centred approach, trust, meaningful relationship, being open to show vulnerability, and affirming ie encouraging¹.

What does the word of God say on the subject?

Whilst mentoring is not mentioned, we are exhorted to encourage one another. Paul urges the Thessalonians to '...encourage the disheartened, [and to] help the weak..' 1Thes 5. 14. We can see in the early church, during times of hardship and persecution, encouragement was both needed and welcomed. When Stephen is killed, Barnabas is sent to Antioch, and he encourages the Christians there to 'remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.' Acts 11.23. In fact, Barnabas was so called by the apostles as this name means 'son of encouragement' Acts 4. 36.



Other purposes for encouragement include to build one another up (1Thes 5. 11) and to prevent us from 'becoming hardened by sins deceitfulness'. (Heb. 3. 12-13). By what means were the early Christians encouraged? Judas and Silas for example encouraged and strengthened the Antioch believers by their words and spending time with them during a visit. Acts. 15. 32. Tychius is sent by Paul to the Colossian Christians to share about Paul's circumstances and to encourage the Colossians hearts (Col. 4. 8) and also to the Ephesians to share news and to encourage them (Eph. 6. 22). Paul also sends Timothy to the Thessalonians to 'strengthen and encourage them in their faith' particularly in the context of trials they were facing, that they would not be unsettled. 1 Thes. 3. 2-3.



Encouragement is one of the key roles of a Christian mentor. It is important to remember that the Holy Spirit's purpose is also to encourage (Acts. 9. 31) as does the word of God (Rom 15.4) and this leads to hope. In Romans 15. 5, we are reminded that God gives endurance and encouragement.

In a mentoring relationship, we must remember that we must be looking to the Holy Spirit to be our guide and therefore prayer must be central. Prayer both for our mentee and for us as we seek to question sensitively and share appropriate what the Lord lays on our hearts.

There are a few Biblical examples of mentoring. Paul mentors Timothy in the context of church leadership. Paul was an example to Timothy, by his way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions and sufferings (2Tim 3.10-11). He then exhorts him to 'continue in what you have learned' (2Tim 3.14). He reminds him to 'fan into

flame the gift of God' that is in him (2Tim1. 6), and of the gospel (2Tim 1.9-10 and to pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace (2Tim 2. 22). He is warned about the likelihood of persecution and to watch for false teaching (2Tim2&3) and foolish arguments and encouraged to preach the word, to correct, rebuke and encourage. (2Tim 4)

Naomi is a sort of mentor to Ruth as she moves with her mother-in-law back to Israel, a new country and culture and serving the Lord, the God of Israel 'under whose wings [she came] to take refuge' Ruth 2.12

In the light of this what are the possible ways you could get involved in mentoring through CMF?

What is mentoring in the context of CMF?

Mentoring is a relational experience in which one person encourages and empowers another by sharing God given resources and drawing on their own spiritual and work experiences, with the goal of encouraging skill and knowledge development as well as growth towards spiritual maturity and the knowledge of the Lord, thus being able to serve (glorify) Him better in work as well as all other areas of life.

What is its purpose?

The Mentor aims to get alongside another Christian and encourage them to 'keep going' and remain steadfast in their faith and grow in their knowledge and love of the Lord and serve him in every area of their lives, including the workplace.



Amidst the increasing pressures in work and trying to achieve a reasonable work-life-church balance, a mentoring relationship is one in which space can be created to discuss thoughts, feelings, ideas and progress - and be prayed for - and pray with someone. It aims to encourage growth and development both spiritually and in the work context. It is not just for those experiencing particular difficulties but also seeks to help individuals make the most of their situation e.g. options/goals/desires. A mentor can be a more senior or mature Christian Doctor/healthcare worker or someone of a similar stage in career and Christian life. Such a relationship may begin formally but may develop into a more informal one as you get to know one another, more akin to a spiritual friendship. A mentoring relationship may be time capped, for a season, or it may be long lasting and develop into a friendship, depending on the context.

Mentoring is beneficial to both mentor and mentee.

But who is it for? Is it only for those in difficulty akin to the trainee in difficulty? And can you be both mentor and mentee simultaneously?

Being a mentor (and/or mentee) is for anyone who is able to set aside some time to pray for and get alongside another Christian and who is able to empathise, listen, relate to, encourage and share personal experiences where appropriate with another Christian, either more junior or of a similar level. Being a mentor also requires recognising your own limitations and knowing when and where to signpost should difficulties be encountered. Mentoring is not aimed at the trainee in difficulty scenario, although mentoring may be helpful for this person at some point along their journey. Mentoring comes under the umbrella of Pastoral care, and there is an element of overlap.

And yes, you can be both a mentor and mentee at the same time, with someone walking along side you in the same way as you walk along side another.

Next Steps



If you have read this far and would love to get involved, a starting point would be to look at your local Catalyst Group, if you have one. Do they have a Pastoral care and/or mentoring catalyst? If they do, approach them with your interest to be involved and you learn about what is already happening in your area. They can tell you about the CMF Pastoral Care and Wellbeing programme through which you can gain recognition as a mentor with CMF.

If you are not sure if there is a local catalyst group in your area then please contact us via the CMF website <https://www.cmf.org.uk/doctors/cmf-local-contacts/> and we will let you know.

Everyone who acts as a mentor through CMF must be first recognised as a Pastoral Partner. This is because Pastoral Care and Wellbeing has been set up to ensure everything we do is safe, Christ centred and Biblically based. Application for recognition as a Pastoral Partner (PP) is a process by which we can accredit anyone involved in Pastoral Care and Wellbeing within CMF. It involves a short interview which is usually online and we ask for references from your church and someone who knows you well. Once recognised all our Pastoral Partners are DBS checked and should be prepared to agree to CMF's Data Protection Policy and our Code of Practice for Pastoral Care.

We then offer a few short generic training sessions with other Pastoral Partners, which cover a range of topics including effective prayer, listening well, risk assessment and confidentiality. You will gain awareness of CMF's safeguarding and pastoral care policies and you will learn about the resources that are available to help. We really try to keep these sessions short and highly interactive using mostly scenario based learning. We recognise that most people who come forward to do pastoral care are already very well equipped.

Once recognised as a Pastoral Partner you will be able to take part in a range of CMF pastoral activities. These might include supporting wellbeing in a Catalyst group, preparing written or broadcast wellbeing resources, supporting wellbeing at our conferences or covering enquiries to the Wellbeing Inbox. Some Partners with specialist skills in a particular area may get involved in training and development for the Wellbeing program. For those who particularly want to do mentoring we offer a further short training module that looks at mentoring skills in more detail.

Then What?

Once trained and accredited CMF Mentors may be introduced to mentees via the local Catalyst Team and also through the national CMF Mentoring Scheme where we match enquirers to available Mentors. We will consider your availability and personal preferences and also those of the mentee applicants.



We are not prescriptive about what the detail of CMF mentoring relationships should look like. We suggest as a minimum however you adopt a basic 'once encourager scheme' in which there is a commitment to pray weekly for your mentee, telephone contact them monthly and meet physically or online once a term. The exact nature of the meetings is flexible and depends on the mentee's needs. There is no limit to the length of time the mentoring relationship may continue but we recommend a mutual review every six months.

You will get ongoing support from the Catalyst Team 'Pastoral Care Catalyst' if you have one and also from the Pastoral Care Advisory Group centrally. We want the whole process to be encouraging for all involved so we are available for advice, prayer and supervision.

We recognise this is a voluntary service and so understand you may increase or reduce your involvement at any time. We are just grateful for any input that can be offered.

So...

Hopefully this information will have stirred up thoughts and questions and we trust that you will prayerfully consider whether you may have a mentoring role in the near future. We look forward to hearing from you. Please contact us via the CMF website <https://www.cmf.org.uk/doctors/cmf-local-contacts/> using the subject heading **#Becoming a Mentor** – we will be in touch.

References

1. <https://www.cmf.org.uk/resources/publications/content/?context=article&id=27192>