

STUDIES IN MINISTRY MINOR
SPIRITUAL MENTORING: REFLECTIONS AND QUESTIONS
HIGHLIGHTS FROM KEITH ANDERSON AND RANDY REESE,
*SPIRITUAL MENTORING: A GUIDE FOR SEEKING AND GIVING DIRECTION*¹

1. Spiritual mentoring is **relational**.
Mentoring begins with our relationship with God, and then moves toward relationship with others.

2. Spiritual mentoring is **autobiographical**.
“The mentoring relationship gives the opportunity to boldly explore the life of another.” There is sacredness in ordinary time, ordinary life, and ordinary events. Create space for attending to the ordinary. These questions can be helpful:
 - Have you noticed a pattern of God’s movement in you life?
 - Did you consider what God could be saying to you in the questions you raise?
 - What might God want you to hear in the events of your life?

Spiritual mentoring helps us pay attention to our stories, and to recognize there the *already present action of God*.

3. **Coming alongside:** Spiritual mentoring is **partnership with the Holy Spirit**.
We are welcomed to pay attention to the already present action of God. This becomes the primary task of the mentor: *to awaken the mentoree to his or her uniqueness as a loved child of God, created in the image of God for intimacy of relationship that empowers the individual for authentic acts of ministry*.

The role of the mentor is to “*facilitate the discovery process*.”

4. Spiritual mentoring is **purposeful**.
The task of the mentor is to help us sink deep into our lives to help us discover that purpose.

5. Spiritual mentoring **requires listening**.
“A spiritual mentor must be a listener—to God first, to self second and to the mentoree third or to all three simultaneously.” The mentor must have a spirit of teachableness.

¹ InterVarsity Press, 1999.

Reflection for the mentor:

- Create a setting in which your relationship with the mentoree can be natural and comfortable. There is no formula for how to begin each session together, but it is important that you are intentional about the process of establishing trust and intimacy.
- Don't use this time to dominate the conversation with your latest spiritual insights or personal issues. This time is for the mentoree. The key is learning when to speak, and when to listen.
- Prepare your mentoree in prayer. Remember to attend to God's agenda.

6. Spiritual mentoring requires adaptable discernment.

Discernment is the ability to see deeply into the truth of a person's life or situation. It asks:

- What is God up to in this situation?
- Where is God's hand at work in this?

“The goal is not to copy some perfect plan created by another, but rather to discern wise pathways for the particular mentoree.”

7. Not only for specialists: Spiritual mentoring belongs to the priesthood of all believers.

Everywhere there are wise mentors, and those ready to be mentored.

Eugene Peterson claims there are only two skills necessary to unselfconsciously mentor another:

- Unknowing: Catechesis is not required, and a leisurely pause before mystery is. Where is God's hand at work in this?
- Uncaring: When the mentor gets out of the way and allows the Holy spirit to do the caring. “These are moments when caring is not required, when what the spirit is doing in other persons far exceeds what we ourselves are doing.”