

## **Characteristics of a Healthy Mentor**

### **Consistency**

Consistency isn't the same as perfection. Consistency means living a spiritually integrated life and avoiding spiritual compartmentalization—in other words, keeping God involved in every area of your life. Teenagers want to follow mentors who demonstrate consistency and integrity. They will have their eyes and ears open for major inconsistencies in the life of a mentor—or any other adult.

### **Transparency**

Don't try to act a certain way in the mentoring process. Be yourself and allow your teenager to see that you're a person who has good days and bad days. Don't attempt to become "cool," because most teenagers can see right through the act. Let your student discover what it means to be a genuine Christian—something that teenager will see in your life as you spend more and more time together.

### **Good Listener**

Good listening skills are important to the success of any relationship, including a mentoring relationship. Being a mentor doesn't mean imparting all of your wisdom and knowledge to a deserving young person. A good mentor will listen to the questions and hear what the teenager is saying, instead of trying to figure out what to say next. Listen!

### **Honesty**

Honesty is so important in mentoring. A mentor might see something in the student's life that other people have been hesitant to say. A good mentor will talk about all areas and be honest with the mentee. Ultimately, honesty will provide a healthy foundation for your mentoring relationship.

### **Forgiving Attitude**

Your student will fail you. You will fail your student. Neither of you is perfect. A healthy mentor accepts that fact and is willing to forgive and to seek forgiveness. Of course, this doesn't mean you shouldn't challenge your teenager to excel and work hard, but be patient as your student learns—and remember that forgiveness is a two-way street.

### **Encourager**

Most teenagers today don't get enough encouragement. Some have good parents and friends who are encouraging, but as a whole, teenagers greatly lack in this area. A good mentor will encourage the student and find things in his or her life that are positive. Affirmation is one of the greatest ways to build bridges with teenagers. Learn to encourage more.

### **Faithful**

Praying for your teenager should be a high priority as you develop and strengthen your mentoring relationship. Some weeks you may be praying about a specific challenge your student is facing. Some weeks you may be simply praying for wisdom or strength. Prayer changes things and allows the Holy Spirit to reveal things that you would not know otherwise. Commit to being a healthy mentor and pray daily for your student.