

you think should be placed on another list. The focus of their efforts should be on their own actions and reactions rather than on what others do or don't do or circumstances they can't change.

You can suggest ways you might be willing to help them with the tasks within their control, like sending a reminder text to continue a healthy habit. As they evaluate the health of the people in their community, offer suggestions for how to widen their circle or who in their circle might be a great candidate to reach out to for specific support. Remind them that next week is the final session, but that doesn't automatically mean the end of your contact with them. Set a time beyond that last session to check in.

## SESSION 4

**Participant Goals:** Move forward in wisdom.

**Mentor Goals:** Offer a next step to continuing on their spiritual path.

**Suggestions for Application:** Evaluate current healthy habits, and continue those physical, spiritual, emotional/relational healthy steps. Help them evaluate any remaining negative coping strategies and take steps to lessen or eliminate them. Offer them the encouragement that even incremental changes forward in these practices build over time into monumental results. Celebrate the official completion of the mentoring program.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

**National Suicide Hotline:** 800-273-8255

**Domestic Violence Resources:**  
thehotline.org, 800-799-SAFE

**Help finding a counselor:**  
psychologytoday.com

**Substance abuse help:** aa.org

**Assistance with food and shelter:**  
endhomelessness.org, hud.org,  
salvationarmyusa.org

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**LEADER'S GUIDE**



The Focus Mentoring experience is a one-on-one program designed to help people take steps forward during challenging circumstances. The intention is that through the mentoring process, they will be able to assess their needs and be guided into healthy physical, emotional, and spiritual practices.

The session content is intentionally brief, and it is meant to spark self-reflection that will lead to helpful conversations. The hope is that the mentor's compassionate and thoughtful interactions will grow the mentee's trust in their heavenly Father and improve their ability to cope with their current situations.

The ideal candidate for Focus Mentoring is a person facing a pivotal circumstance who needs help setting their priorities and making good decisions on their next best steps. They may or may not already have a relationship with God, but they are open to faith conversations and willing to explore what God might have to say about what they're facing.

A word of caution: a person walking through active addiction, extensive abuse or trauma, or is having suicidal thoughts should be evaluated and assisted by a mental health professional who is trained to address any clinical or medical needs they have. While mentoring can also be helpful, it should be in addition to, not instead of, that level of assessment and assistance.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

### Before the First Meeting

- Pray for your mentee and your ability to guide them well.
- Find out their preferred method of communication.
- Clearly communicate the format, starting time, and duration for each session.

### During Each Meeting

- Begin in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation.
- Listen to understand, and ask clarifying questions when needed. Be careful not to interrupt! Share parts of your story only when relevant to theirs—they should talk more than you do.
- Ask for prayer requests each week, and model turning to God in prayer to meet those needs as you end the session.

## SESSION OVERVIEW

### SESSION 1

**Participant Goals:** Evaluate their current situation and take “emotional inventory” of losses.

**Mentor Goals:** Build rapport and trust through listening well. Acknowledge their losses and the resulting emotions.

**Suggestions for Application:** Develop positive strategies for processing their emotions. Based on their current self-report, brainstorm together a list of ideas to help address physical or emotional coping strategies. For example, how are their eating, sleeping, or exercise habits? Are they maintaining relationships with healthy people? Are there hobbies or creative outlets they can utilize at this time? Suggest one or two healthy coping strategies to begin or continue before the next session. If applicable, choose one negative strategy to stop.

### SESSION 2

**Participant Goals:** Rely on God.

**Mentor Goals:** Challenge them to continue healthy habits while adding a spiritual discipline.

**Suggestions for Application:** Begin a spiritual practice. Talk through how they experienced reading Scripture and praying this week. Make suggestions for additional reading or prayer strategies.

Based on what they have already tried, suggest journaling using the questions listed in the Session Guide. You could also suggest reading Scripture aloud or praying aloud, reading a devotional, listening to or singing worship music, or using a Bible app to listen to Scripture. Encourage those who have had a spiritual practice in the past to evaluate whether those old habits are too overwhelming right now because of their current season of life, or if they might be more life-giving because they are familiar. Challenge those who have never had a faith practice to start small, giving themselves the goal of simply connecting with God in whatever way makes the most sense to them.

### SESSION 3

**Participant Goals:** Evaluate what they can control and then take charge of those areas.

**Mentor Goals:** Challenge them to build community while continuing healthy habits and spiritual disciplines.

**Suggestions for Application:** Connect with their community and ask for help, while releasing the need to control the things that are out of their control. Help them evaluate the lists of things inside and outside their control and gently challenge anything