

MENTORING SAFETY & BOUNDARIES

First off: thank you for mentoring.

Seriously. Showing up for someone consistently in today's world is rare, and it matters more than you probably realize.

Mentoring is not about having all the answers. It's about helping people take their next step toward Jesus through encouragement, honesty, wisdom, and presence.

That said, healthy mentoring relationships need healthy boundaries. These guidelines are here to help protect both you and your mentee so the relationship can stay safe, sustainable, and life-giving.

1. START SLOW

It's OK to take time getting to know someone before fully committing.

We recommend:

- Starting with a one-time meetup first
- Meeting in a public place initially (coffee shops are undefeated)
- Taking 1-2 meetings to discern if the relationship feels like a good fit

You are not expected to immediately say yes to mentoring someone long-term.

Need a free meetup spot? Most Crossroads sites have open atrium hours during the week (plus free coffee ☕). Check your site's hours for details.

2. KEEP HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

A mentor is not:

- a therapist
- a savior
- a financial provider
- someone available 24/7

You are a guide. A safe person. Someone willing to listen, encourage, challenge, and point people toward Jesus.

A few healthy boundary reminders:

- Do not give or loan money
- Avoid becoming someone's sole emotional support
- Be clear about your availability and communication rhythms

Same-gender mentoring relationships are strongly encouraged. You are never expected to accept a mentorship request from someone of the opposite sex if you do not feel fully comfortable doing so.

If you do choose to mentor someone of the opposite sex, we strongly encourage extra wisdom and healthy boundaries:

- Meet in public places
- Keep communication appropriate and transparent
- Avoid secrecy or emotional dependency
- Be especially mindful if either person is married

Clear boundaries help relationships stay healthy.

3. IF SOMETHING FEELS BIGGER THAN YOU

Sometimes mentees share really hard things:

- depression
- self-harm
- abuse
- addiction
- suicidal thoughts
- marriage crises
- trauma

You do NOT need to carry those situations alone.

In fact, asking for help is part of being a healthy mentor.

If something feels beyond your depth, uncomfortable, unsafe, or overwhelming, please reach out to us. We can help connect your mentee with additional care, resources, or support.

4. RED FLAGS TO PAY ATTENTION TO

Reach out to our team if you notice:

- manipulation or controlling behavior
- inappropriate romantic interest
- repeated financial requests
- communication that feels unsafe or excessive
- concerning mental health or safety issues
- anything that simply feels “off”

You do not need to have proof that something is wrong before asking for guidance.

5. WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU

You are not expected to mentor perfectly.

You are expected to:

- show up honestly
- stay within healthy boundaries
- ask for help when needed
- trust God to do the heavy lifting

If you ever need support, questions answered, or help navigating a situation, email us anytime: mentors@crossroads.net

Thanks again for stepping into this. Quiet consistency changes lives more than you know.

—The Crossroads Mentoring Team

