



MENTORING RESOURCE



INTRODUCTION

What local leaders do you have? What is your plan to involve young people in leading your church? Most churches have no clear plan to develop leaders, which is catastrophic because leaders aren't found; they are made!

What would your corps look like if every young person had a supportive guide helping them navigate challenges and celebrate victories in life? What would The Salvation Army look like if every leader developed another leader? The results could be exponential!

I had someone pour into my life. First, he invited me to his house and fed me cereal and ice cream. Then, he would simply ask me how things were going. After that, we would read and memorize Bible passages. But, more than that, I watched him. I watched how he raised his children and handled conflict with his wife. What he spent his time doing and what he did with his money. Today, he remains an example and encouragement as I continue to follow Jesus.

Paul developed a simple framework for developing leaders: *"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others"* (2 Tim 2:2, NIV). We are all charged with passing on the gospel, our faith and some help to others. It may seem daunting to accept the responsibility of influencing young people, but it isn't as hard as you imagine. Youth aren't looking for perfect people - just someone who cares, shares their mistakes and successes, and is consistent in their lives. This guide will give you the necessary framework and some ideas to make the most in helping youth grow in Christ.

Helping teens grow into young adults can be one of the most rewarding experiences ever. Think back to when someone supported you to help set the trajectory for where you are today! Now, you get the opportunity to make a real difference and can probably think of someone you can influence!

Ready To LEAD puts you in a position with the tools to help young people become CHRIST-Centred. This foundation ensures they have a guide to flourishing in life. You will also see your influence as they become OTHERS-Focused. What you invest in the next generation is multiplied as they participate in God's redemptive mission to save souls, grow saints, and serve suffering humanity.

Of course, developing our young people aligns with The Salvation Army's vision statement, "We are an innovative partner mobilized to share hope wherever there is hardship, building communities that are just and know the love of Jesus." Supporting youth who will take hold of this vision is essential to our future. The character and commitment of our Army to its vision, mission and values are critical to serving Jesus and others faithful to the calling we have received.

Thank you for taking this step to nurture those entrusted to take hold of the big plan God has for them!







TABLE OF CONTENTS

How To Be A Good Guide	3
What Is Discipleship?	3
Be Someone Worth Imitating	5
The Priority of Prayer	5
Understand Context	6
Ask Powerful Questions	7
Ask Permission to Share	8
Confidentiality	8
Using Small Groups	9
Safety and Trust	10
Resources	11





HOW TO BE A GOOD GUIDE

You likely already know the enormous privilege and responsibility it is to guide young people in their spiritual walk. Even the best discipler, Jesus, had people misunderstand, reject, and betray him. But, those are largely the exceptions. Think about how rewarding it is to make a difference in a young person's life. What you invest now will multiply their reach and witness in the world.

Discipleship isn't an optional activity for Christians. Jesus commanded it in His last words,

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

Discipleship is mysterious. You can say and do things that are fruitful in someone's life. There are also things that you have absolutely no control over! Paul talked about how people can plant and water, but ultimately spiritual growth is God's work: "So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (1 Cor 3:7, NIV). Here are some areas that you'll want to include as a guide.

What is Discipleship?

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." Matthew 22:37-40 (NIV)

Being a disciple involves every part of our being. Discipleship existed thousands of years before this approach and is emerging to become something new. Most models of discipleship are right in what they emphasize but faulty in what they miss.

We are likely to overemphasize discipleship to be:

- Theological education (head knowledge)
- Moralism (behaviour modification)
- Activism (charity and service)
- Church growth (attendance and inviting others)
- A Sunday performance (singing or playing an instrument)
- Fellowship (hanging out with Christian friends)

None of these reductions are wrong in what they emphasize. If we recruited all of these aspects, we would have a really good disciple. But do you notice what is missing? Right! An ongoing personal relationship with God. Remember, our filter helps RTL students balance and work on every essential component of discipleship.

“In the beginning, the church was a fellowship of men and women centring on the living Christ. Then the church moved to Greece, where it became a philosophy. Then it moved to Rome, where it became an institution. Next, it moved to Europe, where it became a culture. And, finally, it moved to America, where it became an enterprise.”

– Richard Halverson, chaplain to the US Senate 1981- 1995

Discipleship originally meant to emulate a person – a rabbi, like Jesus. A good disciple would be “covered in the dust of the rabbi,” meaning that they would follow the rabbi wherever he may go. And in doing so, they would end up talking like the rabbi and doing the same things the rabbi did.

Discipleship was always done in groups. You’ll notice that Jesus often picked up lessons to teach as his disciples argued or were doing things together. Discipleship has always been a team sport.

Alicia Britt Cole explains why we moved away from a personal relationship with Jesus and other people:

“Program was safer, more controllable, reproducible - less risky, less messy, less intrusive. It seemed easier to give someone an outline than an hour, a well-worn book, than a window into our humanity. How easy it is to substitute informing people for investing in people, to confuse organizing people with actually discipling people. Life is not the offspring of a program or paper. Life is the offspring of life. Jesus prioritized shoulder-to-shoulder mentoring because His prize was much larger than information; it was integration.”¹

Life is the offspring of life. The reason programs fail is that each disciple is unique. Also, programs can’t adjust for the tragedies and transience of our busy lives. What do you do if someone now is on the soccer field and can’t make it to your small group? What exists for young people when they go to college? Relationships last and can ride the roller coaster of life. When we encourage others to follow Jesus, we have a strong foundation and many ways to connect and be flexible. Besides, being a disciple is a 24/7 activity (Romans 12:1-2). It happens everywhere you and your young person go!

Discipleship is more caught than taught! It’s about:

Being with Jesus

Becoming like Jesus, and

Doing Jesus things!

For more learning on what discipleship is and how it changes people, families and communities John Mark Comer has prepared an excellent teaching series you can find [HERE](#).

¹ Ogden, Greg. *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time*. Revised and Expanded. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, an imprint of InterVarsity Press, 2016.

Be Someone Worth Imitating

Who you are will add authority and impact what you say. Paul encouraged Timothy, *“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers”* (1 Tim 4:16). Your life and what you believe is full of redemption and growth possibilities. When you work on being a better friend of Jesus and participating in His mission, you’ll influence others to be the same. We teach what we know, but ultimately, we reproduce who we are.

If you look at your life today, what will those following you be? Paul also pleaded with the Corinthians, *“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ”* (1 Cor 11:1, NIV). Some of the activities in the conversation guides shouldn’t just be a conversation they are activities to share together. Jesus took his disciples along with him on his mission. What invitations can you extend to others as you serve neighbours and share the gospel? It is likely that seeing and doing things with you will create more memories and teachable moments. Much of Jesus’ teaching is tied to a specific miracle or event. When we live as a “community in mission,” there are teachable moments. Life begets life. That’s why Paul reminded the Thessalonians, *“We cared for you because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well”* (1 Thessalonians 2:8, NIV emphasis added).

As a leader, you can

- Live a life of prayer
- Read your Bible
- Be in an accountable, supportive discipleship relationship
- Contribute to your corps’ witness and worship
- Share your testimony of restoration and growth in God
- Manage your home, work and physical wellbeing
- Provide hospitality
- Be generous with your time, money and talents

Your life may be the only example someone has of what it means to be a Christian!

The Priority of Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, where we derive our 10th doctrine, prays like this, *“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it”* (NIV, emphasis added).

It's important that each connection point is embedded in prayer for your disciple. Jesus, of course, prayed for his disciples,

*“My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.”
John 17:15 - 18 (NIV)*

Jesus continues to pray for us, His disciples here today:

*My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
John 17:20-24*

Along with the Conversation Guides, there will be a resource to pray for your disciples using scripture. You can, of course, add your own words, just like a jazz musician will improvise from a standard and make it their own. Praying for others invites freedom and joy. It's even more exciting to see Him do it!

Understand Context

You may ask, “What can I say or do for a young person today?” The world has changed a lot in the past 20 years. With the internet, social media, and 24-hour news cycles, young people are constantly bombarded with information and messages. They are also more connected to each other than ever before. Ironically, they are more disconnected in other ways. Likely your advice and context will not fit the nuances of their lives. You may have fear of saying the wrong thing and looking foolish. However, you don't need to have all the answers. Be transparent as you ask hard questions and search for solutions together. The goal is not to give them a perfect answer but rather to help them grow in their relationship with Christ.

The perfect response is to be curious. As you get to know them, pay attention to their unique experiences, joys, and sorrows. Try not to fix them but rather journey with them and let them be experts in their own lives. Your encouragement and support will give them much-needed self-awareness.

Most young people don't have a positive influence outside of their family. By being open and non-judgmental, they will share with you things they may not share elsewhere. To be seen, heard and known in each area of our lives is a great human calling. Being an RTL Guide gives you that safe context for championing the next generation. There will be times to challenge others to comfort. Many

conversations will be demanding, and you will need to manage your discomforts to remain interested in where God is working in your disciple. Think of each meeting as a place where you will harvest information to pray for your young person.

Ask Powerful Questions

Asking youth good questions to draw out their awareness and growth. The first thing you'll want to do is build trust and rapport. Practicing active listening is essential in your Connection points. Most of the work will come from your student. A good rule is you should speak 25% of the time and have them fill the remaining 75%. After asking a question, try to notice something they are saying that they would be served by exploring further. Ask another open-ended question.

Here are some questions you can ask to get to know your RTL disciple.

How was your week?

What were some of the things that made you happy this week?

What made you frustrated this week?

Who are the people that are important to you?

What are things you're passionate about?

What are your goals?

What things do you do that help you relax and feel recharged?

What do you think is unique about you?

Do you think God has a specific plan for your life?

How do you hear from God?

Here are some cheat questions when you don't know what to say. It is important to keep them talking so they can work out their own solutions and feel your interest and support.

What else?

That's interesting. Can you tell me more about that?



What's the real challenge here for you?

What have you tried?

Why is this important to you?

If they say, "I don't know," ask - "If you did know, what's the first thing that comes to your mind?"

What has been most helpful for you in this time together?

What's next?

How comfortable are you with silence? Most people are really uncomfortable with pauses in conversation. Can you outlast your RTL disciple when it comes to awkward silence? Giving them the space and time to think will help them process and become more aware of themselves and God when you probe. Don't pay attention to their eyes. When they look up or to the side, their brain is searching for answers and recruiting everything they know about their life and context. This means you have asked a great question! Enjoy watching them figure things out and trust God is at work in the conversation.

Ask Permission to share

The best time to give advice or provide a personal example or story is when others want you to. If you ask, "Can I share something with you that relates?" or "Do you mind if I give you a challenge here?" 99.9% of the time, you will build trust and open their minds to what you say. This removes offence or the perception that you could be judging them. Another way to challenge is to make what you say conditional, "I might be wrong here, but I just have a thought that may help. Do you mind if I share it with you?" This is like the courtesy of knocking on someone's door instead of barging into their house. The more delicate and respectful you are in your conversations, the more safe and effective you will be.

Confidentiality

What your student shares with you is precious. They may have shared a deep struggle or even their best success. Consider, what could happen if you shared with someone else what they didn't want you to share. Trust can easily be broken and relationships end because of this. Therefore, it is most important that as a guide, everything your student shares with you is held in the most strict confidentiality. For sensitive matters, we suggest double confidentiality. That is, what is shared with you is owned by the student. Not only will you not bring it up with other people, but you will also not bring it up in passing or in public.

Now, there is a time when confidentiality must be broken. This must be explicitly communicated between yourself and your student when you begin investing in them. If your student shares that they

are harming themselves or others or if they are experiencing abuse of any kind, you will need to report that to the appropriate person. Ensure that you are trained in your corps child and youth protection policies and are connected to the correct resources for reporting and support.

Using Small Groups

Small groups are a great way to build relationships with others and grow in faith. There are two great advantages to using small groups for Ready to Lead. First, you get to maximize the impact of your time. Because RTL is so personal, it is recommended to ensure groups are less than 5 and are of the same gender. The second advantage is that each participant has more to share and interact with. A vibrant community of support in common challenges is a real advantage for living a sanctified life. This was the whole idea in John Wesley's Holy Club.

To lead a small group effectively, you need to be able to develop relationships with your group members and create an environment where they feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and feelings. You should also be able to provide guidance and support for your group members as they work through the Conversation Guides.

10 points for good small groups:

1. Be hospitable to ensure your environment is safe and comfortable
2. Get to know your group members
3. Make sure everyone feels comfortable sharing
4. Be open and honest with your group members
5. Respect each member's opinions
6. Make sharing as equal as possible, including yourself
7. Don't force anyone to share
8. Pray for your group members
9. Be consistent with your day and time to establish a good rhythm
10. Have clear expectations and group agreements around confidentiality

Safety and Trust

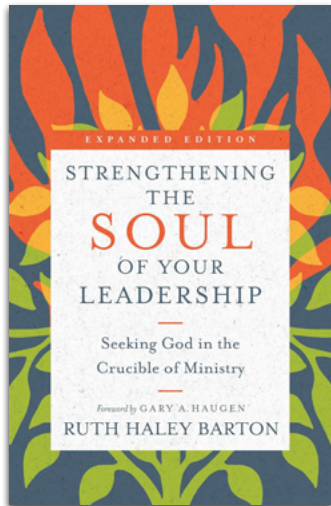
The Salvation Army is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment for all participating in its programs and services. Therefore, it has the strongest protection standards for its youth and leaders. Abuse of any sort is not tolerated, and every measure to prevent it is undertaken.

RTL leaders must complete a criminal record check, complete Armatus Abuse Prevention Training and yearly refreshers, and submit an application to work with youth and children before any engagement in leading youth.

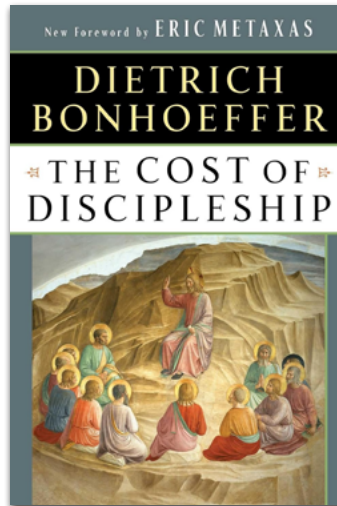
It is expected that RTL leaders

- never meet a youth alone in a private or inappropriate space
- always have at least two other people present during all interactions with youth
- immediately report any suspicion or allegation of abuse according to provincial guidelines and the corps officer.
- communication should be appropriate and transparent on any text platform and in-person settings.

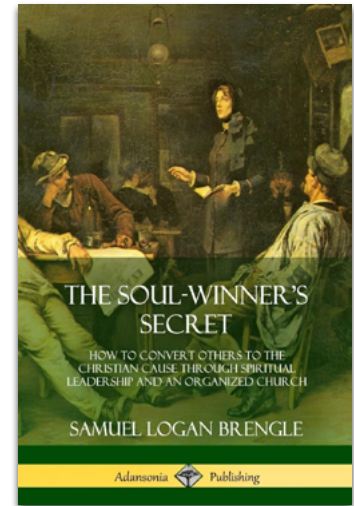
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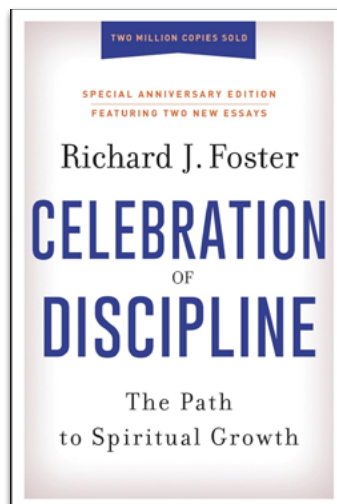
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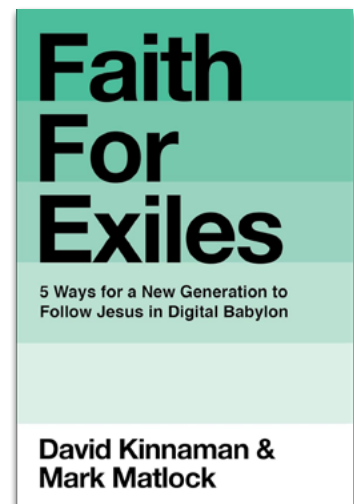
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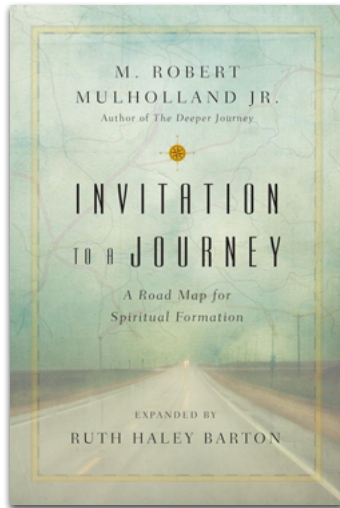
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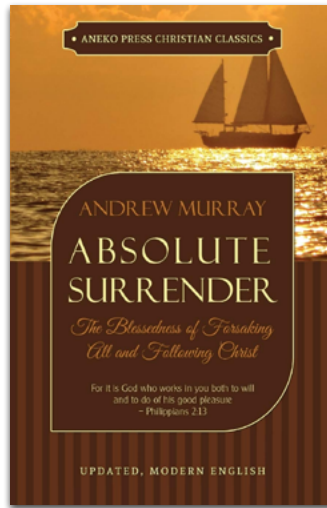
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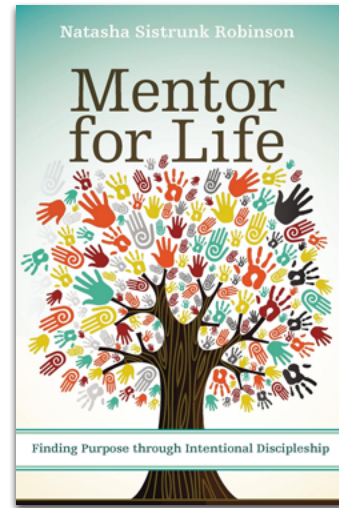
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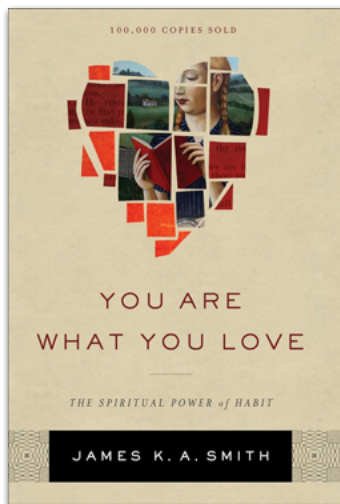
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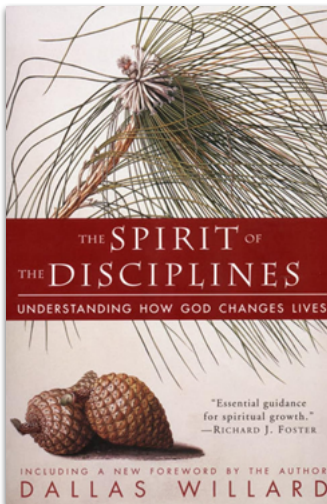
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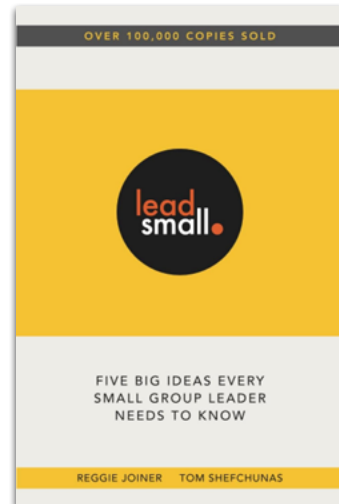
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