

Friendship With A Purpose

T.E.A.M. Mentoring

December

Newsletter 2013



Love is Spelled . . . TIME

Recently I have given a lot of thought into what effective mentoring looks like and what component(s) are most important. Remember when we use the word mentor or mentoring, the Biblical word would be to disciple or discipleship. My first example of what mentoring or discipleship consists of is the model that Jesus Christ gave us.

I have for some time known that the first component that makes up effective discipleship is **LOVE**, spelled - **T I M E**. When we love someone we find that we want to spend time with them, listen to them, talk to them, share a meal with them, enjoy leisure time with them, and in general, do life together. In America the word love has become so enmeshed with sexuality, lust, and lewdness that I hesitate to use the term. But I use it in the way that John did in John 3:16 where it says, God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

This is the time of year when we celebrate that God decided the best way to show mankind how much He loved us was by sending His only Son to spend time with us, to be born a baby, to do life together with His disciples, as a man, and ultimately give His life itself. God made a choice, Jesus chose to comply. Jesus chose his disciples and poured into their lives while eating with them, traveling with them, and doing ministry with them. How much time did Jesus give? He gave up His whole life! He lowered himself and lived with those He chose to love and disciple and then willingly chose to die for them and all the world who are willing to accept His gift.

Our volunteers give up the most precious thing they have, their life, or at least a couple hours per week of their life. T.E.A.M. asks for two hours per week spent with someone who desperately needs Christ-like love in the form of a friendship. Many sacrificially give up more than two hours per week to be a friend to a brother or sister in Christ coming out of prison and struggling to overcome the struggles that come with that. Struggles, which include getting a job, a place to live, and a healthy lifestyle. But the greatest need they have is for new friends who love and care about them, spend time with them and are willing to listen to them, and model Christlikeness for them.

This greatest need can only be met by the greatest sacrifice, - love, spelled - T I M E. I have recently been trying to determine how much time (or dosage) is adequate. Everything indicates that a man or woman coming out of incarceration needs a minimum of six hours per week of constructive discipleship time. That is one of the reasons TEAM mentors in "teams". This is why we try and have three or more mentors each committed to giving up two hours of their time to "do life" with an ex-prisoner.

Some studies show that with mentoring, too little time spent with a mentee can actually be harmful or detrimental to the desired goal of helping them to be successful. Another apparent criteria for effectively mentoring men and women coming out of prison is that the greatest dosage of time must come immediately upon leaving prison and it can then slowly be tapered off as they establish more healthy friendships.

I wish all our T.E.A.M. Mentoring friends and financial supporters a Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year but especially to our mentors who willingly lay down a couple hours of their lives every week for a friend!

Larry Gaalswyk
Executive Director

Did You Know?

Did you know that in the United States there are 4,420 jails and prisons and 338,000 Christian churches? Do the math.

That means for every house of corrections there are 76 houses of worship that claim to be Christ-centered, God-honoring and Spirit-filled.

On any given Sunday in America, 130 million people go to church and 2.3 million sit in jails and prisons. Do some more math.

That means for every prisoner in the United States, there are 57 followers of Jesus Christ attending church nearby.

You wouldn't think TEAM Mentoring would have any trouble finding mentors!

Upcoming Events

December 15: Join Us! The Community Center, 129 Monarch, at 2:00PM for Hors O'oeuvres & Desserts

December 21: Eagles Nest Session at the Women's Prison 9:00 - 11:00a.m.

January 3rd: Volunteer Clearance Deadline to submit your name for the men's ReEntry Classes the week of April 7th

January 11th & 25th: Eagles Nest at the Women's Prison 9:00 am

February 8th & 22nd: Eagles Nest at the Women's Prison 9:00 am

April 7 - 11th MT ReEntry at Men's State Prison, Deer Lodge.

For More information on TEAM's events, please go online to www.teammentoring.org

**Merry
Christmas**

God's Restoration



I was paroled out of Montana State Prison on August 9, 2012, and arrived that evening at Montana Rescue Mission. I had served three weeks in the North Dakota Penitentiary, eight months at Butner, the Federal Hospital Prison in North Carolina, and a year and nine months at Montana State Prison.

All together, a total time of five years and seven months of incarceration. During this time, I had lost my wife through a divorce and there was little communication with my eleven children. In the first few months of incarceration, I became completely broken. After days of calling out to God in desperation, a conversion of my heart took place and through prayer, I came to know Jesus in a new and close way. Everything had been taken from me and gradually the worldly possessions didn't mean anything anymore. My family loss was my biggest concern.

In the first year of incarceration, after surgery to obtain a lung biopsy, I was diagnosed with stage 4 prostate cancer that had metastasized to my lungs and the prognosis was four months to two years at best. The Oncologist told me there was nothing that could be done, no treatment would help. That same day, I was anointed and prayed over. Two months later I had a chest x-ray and it showed no signs of the nodules that had previously covered 7/8 of my lungs. My PSA levels had been a 26 before the

biopsy, but now had dropped to .00164, or undetectable for cancer cells, and has remained at that level ever since.

God's miracle certainly was undeserved, but I began to thirst for His Word at every waking moment and that has not let up to this day.

During my time of incarceration, I spent most of my time praying, studying scriptures, reading Christian books, and Bible studies. TEAM Mentoring has been a solidifying walk for me since I have been back into society and I'm very thankful for that.

Then another miracle happened, perhaps this one more profound than being healed of cancer. My wife and I were reunited and I have reconciled with my children and grandchildren. I recently moved back to Bismarck, North Dakota to live with my wife and be close to most of my children.

I believe the answer to a successful reentry is through this program with the right attitude, choices, and actions. The tools are all here in the program to lead us in our walk with Christ.

Larry Suchy

October ReEntry Class



MT ReEntry at the State Prison in Deer Lodge was held the week of October 28th with 24 graduates. 22 volunteers made it possible by participating also.

In the last couple of weeks two graduates were paroled to Billings and mentoring teams are being placed around them.



I strongly feel that the most important event that has helped me the entire time I have been at MT State Prison has been my time with the TEAM Mentoring MT ReEntry program.

David

Was awesome! Thank you for your hearts and the sincerity of your love and faith.

Sean

