

THE **NEXT MILE**SM

SHORT-TERM MISSIONS FOR THE LONG HAULSM



**MENTOR
GUIDE**

FOR MENTOR EYES ONLY

Acknowledgment

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Introduction

Congratulations! You've been selected to be someone's Mentor! That's a big honor. Being chosen means someone feels close enough to you to count you as a trusted friend! There are many things your friend will go through on this journey. With the use of The Mentor Guide, you will help deepen the experience before, during, and after the short-term ministry.

"What is a Mentor? What do I have to do?" Don't worry, it's not difficult. Your main obligations are to pray for, encourage, guide, and listen to your friend. Be there during pre-field preparations. Be there through prayer during the on-field ministry. Be there during re-entry to help process the experience. Along the way, you can help find answers to questions your short-terminer may have. For resources, ideas, and links to related topics visit www.thenextmile.org.

"How many times do I meet with my short-terminer?" You will need to meet together *at least* two times ... once before and once after the mission. If you can meet more times, so much the better! You've heard that "quality time" is better than "quantity time." The truth is, because they are both important in many areas of our lives, it is better not to have to choose between the virtues of quality versus quantity. Your effort to give your short-terminer both will not go unrewarded.

The Mentor Guide is simple to use. It is divided into five categories arranged in chronological order with space for you to take notes. Here are your specific responsibilities:

- 1. Pray.** Starting four weeks before departure, call or meet with your short-terminer weekly just to pray. The Mentor Guide includes space for prayer requests. Keep track of these so when your short-terminer returns you can rejoice in God's answers.
- 2. Encourage.** Gather encouragement letters from friends and relatives to be given to your short-terminer each day of the mission experience.
- 3. Prepare.** Meet once before departure to discuss questions, fears, hopes, and expectations your short-terminer may have about the journey.



4. Listen. Have a special meeting after re-entry to listen to experiences, reflections, joys, and concerns about the mission experience. Talk about what lies ahead because of the life-change that occurred during the short-term ministry.

5. Report. Complete the Mentor Observation Report Form and return it to the team leader.

Thank you and may the Lord bless and guide you every step of the way!

Mentor's Timeline and Check List

"Well begun is half done." Take the time to plan the journey with your short-termer right now. Mark your calendar for the things that you can. Then use this check list to make sure that you make the most of your mentoring experience.

Destination and dates of my short-termer's journey:

Departure time and airline:

Return time and airline:

Pre-field meetings: (date, time, and place)

Encouragement letters due to team leader: (two weeks prior to departure)

Post-field meetings: (date, time, and place)

Mentor Observation Report Form sent to Team Leader by:

SECTION ONE: PRAY

Pre-Field

Your most important assignment as a Mentor is to *pray*. Begin four weeks before departure and check weekly with your short-termer to see how things are going. Ask for things you can pray for regarding the upcoming short-term ministry. Record prayer concerns from these four conversations.

Your friend will have many faith-stretching opportunities. God will work mightily in the many details that must come together. Your short-termer will experience God's great provision in many ways—spiritually, emotionally, physically, practically, and financially.

Your short-termer will need your prayer in preparing for mission, in ministering on the field, and in returning home. Spaces are provided for prayer requests. Before departure, your friend can give you an idea of the schedule onsite and the ministries which will take place. Write down travel days, ministry days, and names of people or events for which you can pray specifically.

Perhaps you would like to give your short-termer some kind of reminder of this prayer partnership: a bookmark or card with Scripture verses or a photo of the two of you.

Keep track of prayer requests and answers to prayer in the space below.

Prayer and Praise

Four weeks before departure.

Three weeks before departure.

Two weeks before departure.

One week before departure.

On-field prayer requests.

SECTION TWO: ENCOURAGE

Preparation for On-Field

One daily highlight during your friend's short-term mission is receiving letters of encouragement written by people at home. As Mentor, you will be gathering these notes and giving them to the team leader for your friend to read and enjoy each day of the journey. Your short-termer will not know about this until the first day on-site, so please *keep this a secret!*

SSHH!
IT'S A
SECRET

Enclosed is a sample explanation of encouragement letters for you to copy and give to your short-termer's family and friends. Be sure to provide *your* name and address, because writers will return these letters to you. There are suggested topics and creative ways to write encouraging letters.

Since you were chosen as a Mentor, you must know your friend pretty well. Come up with a list of family members and friends to contact about these letters (one for each day the short-termer will be on the field). Use the Encouragement Note Chart to keep track of the letter-writers. We suggest you begin to contact them as soon as you receive this packet.

You will need to gather all the encouragement letters and give them to the team leader *at least* one week before departure. If you miss this deadline, everyone else on the team will get letters except your short-termer. Be sure not to disappoint, OK? *And don't forget to have fun writing your own encouragements to send along!*

Here is a sample letter to give to those who agree to write letters to the short-termer.

Dear Friend or Family Member,

You are one of a specific number of people who have agreed to write an encouraging note to _____. This is a significant ministry. Your words can be used by God to strongly impact a servant's life! You have a unique opportunity to encourage and bless. Thank you for taking the time to do so. The team members will not know about this part of their mission experience until the first morning on the field, so *keep this a secret!*

As you write your letter be creative and prepare something that is special and unique from you, something that will be remembered for a long time. Here are some topic suggestions:

- I'm glad you're on this mission trip because . . .
- Something funny about our friendship is . . .
- You have really encouraged me by . . .
- Some things I admire about you are . . .
- An encouraging Scripture for you is . . .
- This is my prayer for you . . .

Please do NOT send this to the short-termer's home. Address the envelope to the short-termer and return it to the short-termer's Mentor at least ONE WEEK prior to departure date.

Encouragement Note Chart:

DAY	NAME	PHONE	RECEIVED LETTER
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			

(Letter Writer's Name)

Address

City, State, Zip

STAMP

TOP SECRET

(Short-Term's Name)

c/o (Mentor's Name)

Mentor's Address

Mentor's City, State, Zip

SECTION THREE: PREPARE

Pre-Field

About two weeks before departure, get together with your short-termer just to talk. You are trying to accomplish, through a series of well-thought-out questions, an intellectually-stimulating discussion. This time together should help your short-termer consider the personal impact of the trip as well as the impact on the lives of the people who will be served through the ministry. The questions are centered on two themes:

- “Am I ready for this?”
- “What am I expecting out of this?”

You don't have to ask every question listed. They are provided to facilitate your time together. Taking notes during this meeting will help you in your post-field meetings and will also provide prayer material while your short-termer is on-field.

“Am I ready for this?”

Physically Prepared? *Mission trips sometimes involve strenuous activity, and the traveling can be exhausting. Is your short-termer ready?*

1. Are you in good health?
2. What can you do to improve your health before you leave?

Emotionally Prepared? *Your short-termer will more than likely experience roller-coaster emotions during the mission. It helps just knowing that short-termers are usually stretched to the limit, and that it has an effect on emotions.*

3. In one word describe your emotional state right now.
4. How are your relationships going with family members, friends, co-workers, team members?
5. What steps could you take to improve your emotional state?

Spiritually Prepared? *The mission experience will challenge the short-termer spiritually. Being aware of the spiritual battle and preparing for it will help immensely.*

6. How would you describe your spiritual condition this year?
7. Are you taking time for quiet times in the Word and with God in prayer?
8. What do you think God has been teaching you?
9. What could you do to be better prepared spiritually for this mission?

Relationally Prepared? *Living with a group of people 24/7 for more than a week can be a real challenge. Interpersonal conflict is a common problem on short-term mission teams.*

10. Have you been in a team situation before? How would you describe your ability to relate with others, especially in group situations?
11. What makes a good team member?
12. Can you be transparent with others? Are you a good listener?

“God loves to mold you, but he'll chisel if he must...”

13. Are you cooperative with leaders and other team members, even when you may disagree with decisions being made?
14. How could you improve your relational abilities?

Culturally Prepared? *Family culture, American culture, team culture, and host country culture—talk about culture clash! Help prepare for differences in how things get done!*

15. How would you explain culture shock to someone?
16. What if someone from another culture laughs at you or has difficulty understanding you?
17. How can you better prepare for culture shock?

Practically Prepared? *Details, details, details. Help your short-termer take them seriously.*

18. How are you doing financially? Do you have all your support in?
19. What kinds of things do you need to purchase and pack?
20. Will you know what is expected of you during customs and immigration inspections?

“What am I expecting out of this?”

Unmet expectations are a great source of frustration. Conversely, people who are flexible and open to change usually have the most enjoyable mission experiences. During time with your short-termer, look for evidence of unrealistic expectations or inflexibility.

How do you expect the following will change?

- Your relationship with God –
- Your understanding of God –
- Your concept of missions –
- Your view of the world –
- Your view of the body of Christ –
- Your view of the country where you’re going to serve –
- Your view of North America –
- Your view of the North American Church –
- Your understanding of missionaries –
- Your value of friendship –
- Your value of family –
- Your understanding of yourself –

SECTION FOUR: LISTEN

Post-Field

Your friend has just returned from an intense time during which his or her heart has been opened to God's heart like never before. There's no getting around it ... being part of a mission experience has changed your short-termer. It can be difficult to return home to "life as usual." You play a key role in helping your friend bring closure to the mission experience and integrate what was learned into life back home. Help maximize the benefits and on-going impact in your friend's life. Set up an unhurried time over coffee, lunch, or dinner. Your assignment now is to listen. Make this a celebration of the ministry as you look at photos, souvenirs, journals, and anything else the short-termer would like to share with you about the experience.

You have a unique opportunity to impact your friend's view toward future ministry by providing a challenge to integrate this enthusiasm and experience into humble, available, and hard-working service for and in the church. Help your short-termer discover areas of life that need attention and chart a course for dealing with these things. Provide encouragement and accountability for continued spiritual disciplines.

Every Christian is on a spiritual pilgrimage or journey. No matter the age of your short-termer, God is at work for growth, personal change, and spiritual impact. Translating all that was experienced into a course for future impact is critical whether your short-termer is returning to work, school, or another ministry.

There are resources available at www.thenextmile.org to help you and your short-termer explore a variety of personal and ministry-related topics. There are links, ideas, books, and more. Following are some suggested areas for discussion. Read through these questions before you meet with your friend so you are familiar with the flow of conversation. You don't have to ask every question and you shouldn't take notes. (You should, however, jot down notes as soon as this meeting is over while your memory is fresh.) Listen to your friend patiently and non-judgmentally. Remember, you don't need to provide solutions to all the issues your friend may be facing. Just listen through the different topics and ramblings. Be sure to close with a time of thanksgiving for the mission experience and prayer for the next steps to be taken.

Cultural

1. What were your impressions of the country and the culture? Was it as you expected? What new things did you learn about the culture?
2. What did you like best about the culture? What was your favorite event during your mission? Your favorite food? Your favorite place?
3. Tell about a special person you got to know.

Overview

1. Looking back over the mission, how did it compare to what you previously said you were expecting?
2. What was the best thing about the mission?
3. What was the hardest?
4. What was the most significant thing God taught you during this mission?

Personal

1. What is one new thing you learned about yourself during this mission? What new gifts or abilities did you discover?
2. What impact did this mission have on who you are? How did it change you?

3. What was your greatest contribution to the project? What about to the team?
4. What are some needs for growth you discovered?
5. Were you surprised by your response to any situation? Tell about it.

Relationships

1. In one word, describe team dynamics. Describe your relationship with other team members. How do you think they would describe their relationship with you?
2. Describe your relationship with your team leaders. How would they describe their relationship with you?
3. How did you relate to the nationals you met? How do you think they would describe their relationship with you? How did you handle the language and cultural differences?

Spiritual

1. Why do you think God wanted you on this mission?
2. During your mission, what was your relationship with God like? What new things did he show you about himself?
3. Were there times when you felt you were in a spiritual battle? Tell about it.
4. Were there times of frustration? How did you respond?

Re-entry

1. In one word describe what it's like to be home. Are there any difficulties you are having in adjusting to life back here?
2. What was your biggest surprise when you returned home?
3. Is there any unfinished business you need to deal with to bring closure to your mission: hurts to be healed, relationships to be mended? What steps will you take to deal with them?
4. Is there anyone you would like to talk with to help bring closure to your mission? What would you say?

Challenge

1. In one word, how do you want this mission experience to affect the rest of your life?
2. How is this mission affecting your everyday life as a Christian? How would you like it to? Have you set specific goals? Would you like help setting goals?
3. Are there issues that were revealed during your mission that need to be dealt with?
4. How did this mission affect your burden for the needs of the lost and the spread of the gospel?
5. How can your cross-cultural experience be used to enhance your service to the local church here at home?
6. What commitment have you made to missions as a result of this trip? How is that going?
7. What next steps should you take? How will you make yourself accountable?
8. Would you be willing to continue meeting in order to work toward your new goals or to resolve any personal issues you have?

Closing/Prayer

1. How did God specifically answer prayer throughout this mission? Are there specific individuals or needs you want to pray about?
2. Close in prayer. Give God thanks and praise for your short-termers' experience, strengths, gifts, and contributions to the mission, asking God for wisdom and help to grow in needed areas.

SECTION FIVE: REPORT

Post-Field

Thank you for making an investment in your short-termer! You've spent time praying, encouraging, preparing, and listening to your friend all along the way. Hopefully *you* have also grown through this experience. As you reflect on the things you have seen and learned, it may surprise you to feel God moving *your* heart toward mission work.

Please complete the following Mentor Observation Form and return it to the team leader. Your insights will help maximize the impact of this mission experience on your friend's life and on short-termers and mentors to come.

The Next Mile website offers resources to help with follow-through. There are articles, book and video listings and other resources related to "The Top 10" categories as well as other post-ministry issues. Be sure to visit:

www.thenextmile.org

MENTOR OBSERVATION REPORT FORM

Please complete this form and return it to the team leader.

Name of short-termer: _____

Date and location of service: _____ Date of debriefing: _____

Name of mentor: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

State, Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Please make your observations of the short-term mission participant in the following areas:

1. Give a general overview of the participant's view of the short-term experience.

2. Comment on the *personal growth* you observed in the short-termer's life because of the mission experience.

3. Comment on the *spiritual growth* and *cultural adaptation* you observed in the short-termer's life because of this experience.

4. Please relate any difficulties the participant may be having with re-entry issues.

5. Relate any life applications the participant has made as a result of this short-term experience (i.e., new ministry involvement, further interest in missions).

6. What have *you* learned from being a Mentor? Was it worth the effort?

7. Any other comments?

TOP SECRET
MENTOR EYES ONLY

