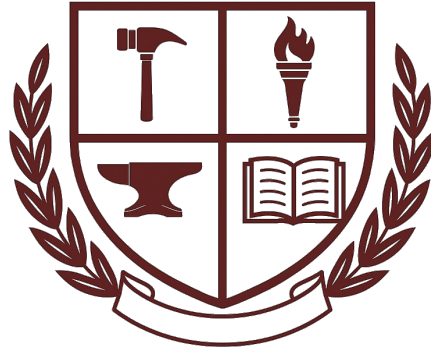


FORGE



FORGE FACILITATOR GUIDE

Phase 3: Practicum

Lead and Serve

Weeks 25–36

Dooly State Prison

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Supervised Mentoring

Week 25: Launching Into the Field

Week 25 Overview

Purpose: This is it. After 24 weeks of preparation — the self-work, the skill-building, the simulations, the assessments — participants step into the role they've been training for. This week they meet their mentees for the first time, co-facilitate their first real session, and begin learning the hardest lesson of all: that real people are messier and more unpredictable than any simulation.

Sessions This Week: - Session 73 (Tuesday): Supervision — Preparing for First Mentee Meetings - Session 74 (Wednesday): Field Work — First Co-Facilitation Session - Session 75 (Thursday): Field Work — First Mentee Meetings (1-on-1)

Materials Needed: - Mentoring Agreement forms (2 per participant — 1 for mentor, 1 for mentee) - Mentoring Log templates (1 per participant — they'll use this throughout Phase 3) - Pre-Session Preparation Checklist (1 per participant) - Field Work Reflection forms (1 per participant per field session) - Journals/ notebooks - Talking piece for circle

Important Phase 3 Note: The weekly schedule has changed. Tuesday is the only structured lesson plan. Wednesday and Thursday are field work days — participants are out in their assigned areas, doing real mentoring and facilitation. The Tuesday supervision session is where they bring what happened, process it, get coached, and prepare for the next week.

SESSION 73: Preparing for First Mentee Meetings

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor(s)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Describe the three goals of a first mentee meeting (connection, clarity, commitment) 2. Use the Mentoring Agreement to structure the first meeting 3. Identify at least five trust-building actions for the first meeting 4. Name the most common mistakes new mentors make in their first meetings 5. Demonstrate a calming technique for managing their own nervousness

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Set up: Chairs in circle. This is the first Phase 3 supervision session — the energy in the room will be different. Some participants will be excited. Others will be terrified. Most will be both.

Facilitator:

"Welcome to Phase 3. Let me say that again so it sinks in: you made it to Phase 3.

Twenty-four weeks ago, you walked into a circle and I asked you to tell me why you were here. Some of you barely spoke. Some of you were skeptical. A few of you were ready to walk out in the first week.

Now you're sitting here as practitioners. Not participants — practitioners. This week, you'll meet the men you've been assigned to mentor. You'll co-facilitate your first real session. You'll do the work you've been training for.

*But before we get into preparation, I want to check in. Talking piece. One question: **How are you feeling right now about what starts this week? Be honest.**"*

Send the talking piece around. Facilitator goes first and models honesty about the weight of this moment. Listen for anxiety, overconfidence, and everything in between.

Facilitator (after the round):

"If you're nervous — good. That means you care. If you're confident — also good. But stay humble, because your mentee doesn't know about your simulations or your portfolio. He's going to judge you by one thing: whether you're real."

The First Meeting: What It Is and Isn't (15 minutes)

Purpose: Set realistic expectations for what the first mentee meeting should accomplish — and what it shouldn't try to do.

Facilitator:

"Your first meeting with your mentee has three goals. Just three. Not twelve. Not 'fix their life.' Three.

One: Connection. *Your mentee needs to leave the first meeting thinking, 'That guy is somebody I might be able to trust.' Not 'I trust him completely.' Not 'He's my best friend.' Just: 'Maybe this is worth my time.' That's a win.*

Two: Clarity. *Your mentee needs to understand what mentoring is and what it isn't. What you'll do together. How often you'll meet. What's expected of him. What he can expect from you. No surprises.*

Three: Commitment. *By the end of the first meeting, you'll complete a Mentoring Agreement together. This isn't a contract — it's a shared understanding. It says: 'Here's what we're doing, here's how we'll do it, here's what we both commit to.'*

That's it. Connection. Clarity. Commitment. If you hit all three, your first meeting was a success."

Pause.

"Now let me tell you what the first meeting is NOT.

It's not therapy. You don't need to dig into their trauma. You don't need to 'get to the root of their issues.' Not yet. That comes later — if it comes at all. Remember: you're a mentor, not a counselor.

It's not a lecture. You don't walk in and tell them all about FORGE and how it changed your life and how it's going to change theirs. That's your ego talking. The first meeting is about listening, not talking.

It's not an evaluation. You're not there to assess whether they're 'good enough' for the program. You're there to meet a human being and begin building something."

Structuring the First Meeting (20 minutes)

Purpose: Walk participants through a concrete plan for how the first meeting should flow.

Facilitator:

"Let's walk through the first meeting step by step. I'm going to give you a structure. You don't have to follow it word-for-word — you'll develop your own style — but for your very first meeting, having a structure will keep you grounded when your nerves kick in."

First Meeting Structure (write on board or distribute):

Step 1: The Introduction (5 minutes)

"Introduce yourself. Not your resume — your humanity. Something like: 'My name is _____. I've been through the FORGE program, and I've been assigned as your mentor. That means we're going to meet regularly, and my job is to support you — not tell you what to do, not judge you, but support you. Before we get into anything, I want to hear from you. What do you know about this, and what questions do you have?'"

Notice what that does: it introduces you, sets the tone, and immediately gives them the floor. You're not performing. You're inviting."

Step 2: Get to Know Them (10-15 minutes)

"Ask questions. Listen. This is where your MI skills come in — open questions, reflections, affirmations. Some good first-meeting questions:

- *'How long have you been here?'*
- *'What's been the hardest part?'*
- *'What are you hoping to get out of having a mentor?'*
- *'What's something you're good at that most people don't know about?'*
- *'Is there anything you want me to know about you right up front?'*

You don't need to ask all of these. Follow the conversation. The goal is for them to feel heard."

Step 3: Set Expectations (10 minutes)

"This is the clarity piece. Cover:

- *How often you'll meet (weekly, on Thursdays — or whatever your schedule is)*
- *How long meetings will be (45-60 minutes typical)*
- *What mentoring looks like: conversations, goal-setting, problem-solving, support*
- *What mentoring is NOT: therapy, favors, special access, fixing everything*
- *Confidentiality: what stays between you, and the limits (safety concerns get referred)*
- *Your role: you're not their boss, not their CO, not their parent. You're someone who's been through the work and is here to walk alongside them."*

Step 4: The Mentoring Agreement (10 minutes)

"Complete the Mentoring Agreement together. Read through each section. Ask if they have questions. Both of you sign. This isn't bureaucracy — it's a handshake in writing. It says: 'We both know what we're doing here, and we both agree to show up for it.'"

Step 5: Close with a Question (5 minutes)

"End with something human. 'What's one thing you'd like to be different about your situation in 3 months?'"

Or: 'Is there anything you wish your mentor would have told you before you came to prison?' Leave them with the sense that this relationship is about them, not about you."

Trust-Building: What Works and What Doesn't (15 minutes)

Purpose: Practical advice on building trust with someone who has no reason to trust you.

Facilitator:

"Your mentee doesn't trust you yet. Let me say that again: your mentee does not trust you. And he shouldn't. Trust is earned, not assumed. You taught this in Phase 1. Now you have to live it. Here's what builds trust in a first meeting:"

Trust builders (discuss each briefly):

*"1. **Show up on time.** Nothing says 'you don't matter' like being late to your first meeting.*

- 1. **Remember their name.** Use it. More than once. People hear their own name and something in them relaxes.*
- 2. **Listen more than you talk.** Aim for a 70/30 split — they talk 70% of the time. If you're talking more than that in a first meeting, you're making it about you.*
- 3. **Don't fake it.** If you don't know the answer to something, say 'I don't know, but I'll find out.' If you're nervous, it's okay to say 'I'm going to be honest — this is my first time doing this, and I'm a little nervous.' That's not weakness. That's authenticity.*
- 4. **Don't promise what you can't deliver.** Nothing destroys trust faster than a broken promise. If you say you'll do something, do it. If you're not sure you can, don't say it.*
- 5. **Match their energy.** If they're quiet, don't overwhelm them with enthusiasm. If they're guarded, don't try to force openness. Meet them where they are.*
- 6. **Respect their space.** Don't sit too close. Don't touch them. Don't act like you're old friends. You're not. Yet."*

What destroys trust:

"And here's what will kill trust before it starts:

- Talking about yourself too much*
- Name-dropping FORGE concepts like you're reading from a textbook*
- Trying too hard to be liked*
- Acting like an authority figure*
- Being distracted or looking around while they're talking*
- Making assumptions about their life or their crime*
- Comparing them to yourself: 'When I was where you are...' — save that for later"*

When You're Nervous: Managing Yourself (10 minutes)

Purpose: Normalize the anxiety and give practical tools.

Facilitator:

"Let's talk about something nobody in a prison wants to admit: being nervous.

Every single new mentor I've ever worked with was nervous before their first mentee meeting. Every one. The ones who say they weren't are lying or they don't care enough. Nervousness means you understand the weight of what you're doing.

But nervous energy leaks. If you're wound up, your mentee will feel it. So you need a plan for managing it."

Techniques:

"Before the meeting:

- *Use 4-4-4 breathing. You learned this in Week 3. Four seconds in, four hold, four out. Do it for 2 minutes before you walk in.*
- *Review your Pre-Session Preparation Checklist. When you've prepared, you feel more in control.*
- *Say out loud — to yourself or to a cohort member — 'I have the skills for this. I've practiced this. I'm ready.'*

During the meeting:

- *If you lose your train of thought, pause. Take a breath. Say, 'Give me a second.' That's human, not weak.*
- *If you don't know what to say, ask a question. Questions always buy you time and put the focus on them.*
- *Sit with your hands relaxed. Open posture. Slow your speech down. Your body can calm your mind."*

Role-Play: First Meeting Practice (25 minutes)

Purpose: Practice the first meeting structure before they do it for real.

Facilitator:

"We're going to practice this right now. Pair up. One of you is the mentor, one is the mentee. Mentee — I want you to be realistic. Not hostile, but not easy. Be the guy who's cautious, who's not sure about this, who's been through enough programs to be skeptical.

Mentor — use the structure we just walked through. Introduction, get to know them, set expectations, start the Mentoring Agreement, close with a question. You've got 10 minutes."

Round 1 (10 min): Pairs practice. Facilitator circulates, listens, makes notes.

Pause and debrief (3 min):

"Mentors — what was harder than you expected? Mentees — what did your mentor do that made you feel heard? What made you shut down?"

Allow 3-4 responses.

Round 2 (10 min): Switch roles.

Final debrief (2 min):

"Thursday, you'll do this for real. It won't go exactly like the practice — it never does. But you have a structure, you have skills, and you have each other. Wednesday morning, we'll check in briefly before your first co-facilitation. But right now — how are you feeling?"

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Before we close — a few logistics. Everyone should have received your assignment sheet with your mentee names, their dorm, and meeting times. If you haven't, see me after this session. You should also have your Mentoring Agreement forms, your Mentoring Log template, and your Pre-Session Preparation Checklist. We'll go over the log and checklist in detail, but take time tonight to read through them.

*Closing round. Talking piece: **One thing you're going to do tonight to prepare for this week.**"*

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (closing):

"Twenty-four weeks led to this. You've done the work. You've earned this. Now go do it.

Wednesday — co-facilitation. Show up early. Prepared. Ready. Thursday — first mentee meetings.

Service Over Self. See you in the field."

Session 73 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
- Opening circle completed — emotional check-in on readiness
- Three goals of first meeting explained (connection, clarity, commitment)
- First meeting structure walked through (5 steps)
- Trust-building and trust-destroying behaviors discussed
- Nervousness normalized — calming techniques reviewed
- Role-play completed (both rounds, with debrief)
- Assignment sheets distributed and confirmed
- Mentoring Agreement forms distributed
- Mentoring Log templates distributed
- Pre-Session Preparation Checklists distributed
- Closing circle completed
- Participants reminded of Wednesday and Thursday field schedule

SESSION 74: Field Work — First Co-Facilitation

Session

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (session) + preparation and debrief time **Structure:** Each participant co-facilitates a session in their assigned area with an experienced FORGE mentor observing

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Co-facilitated a real session with a live group 2. Practiced managing real group dynamics (not simulated ones) 3. Received feedback from an experienced observer 4. Reflected on the difference between practice and reality

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

Complete before arriving at your assigned area:

- Reviewed the session plan with your co-facilitator (at least 30 minutes before)
 - Clarified roles: Who leads which sections? Who handles disruptions?
 - Materials prepared (handouts, talking piece, whatever is needed)
 - Room setup plan discussed (circle, desks, standing — whatever the session calls for)
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed (2 minutes minimum)
 - Reminded yourself: "I don't need to be perfect. I need to be present."
 - Checked in with your observer: Do they have the observation form? Where will they sit?
 - Identified your "grounding word" — one word you can say to yourself if you start spiraling (e.g., "steady," "breathe," "listen")
-

During the Session

Your observer will be watching for: - How you open the session (confidence, warmth, clarity) - How you handle transitions between activities - How you respond to unexpected moments (someone checking out, a

challenge, a disruption) - How you share the space with your co-facilitator (collaboration, not competition) - How you close (did participants leave knowing what to do next?)

Remember: - Speak slowly. New facilitators always rush. - Make eye contact with the group, not just your co-facilitator. - If something goes off-script, follow the energy of the room, not the lesson plan. - If you freeze, your co-facilitator is there. That's the whole point of co-facilitation. - You will make mistakes. Every experienced facilitator did. What matters is how you recover.

Post-Session Debrief (with observer)

Immediately after the session, sit down with your observer for 15-20 minutes.

Observer gives feedback using the SBI model: - **Situation:** "When the group first sat down..." - **Behavior:** "You made eye contact with each person and used their name..." - **Impact:** "The room visibly relaxed."

Participant reflects: 1. What went well? (Be specific — not "it was good," but "I handled the disruption at minute 30 without losing the room.") 2. What was harder than expected? 3. What would you do differently next time? 4. What did you learn about yourself as a facilitator?

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after the session (before Thursday):

1. **Describe the moment you felt most confident during the session. What was happening? Why did it feel right?**
 2. **Describe the moment you felt most uncertain. What triggered it? How did you respond?**
 3. **What surprised you about facilitating a real group compared to the simulations?**
 4. **What is one specific thing you want to improve for next Wednesday?**
 5. **Rate yourself on a scale of 1-10 for today's session. What would it take to move up one number?**
-
-

SESSION 75: Field Work — First Mentee Meetings (1-on-1)

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 45-60 minutes per mentee **Structure:** Participants meet individually with each assigned mentee for the first time

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Met each assigned mentee face-to-face 2. Completed a Mentoring Agreement with each mentee 3. Begun building the mentoring relationship through listening and trust-building 4. Logged their first entry in the Mentoring Log

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

Complete before your first meeting:

- Reviewed mentee's basic information (name, dorm, time served, any notes from referral)
 - Mentoring Agreement forms ready (one per mentee)
 - Mentoring Log template ready
 - Reviewed the first meeting structure from Session 73
 - Identified 3-4 open-ended questions to ask
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed
 - Reminded yourself of the three goals: Connection, Clarity, Commitment
 - Checked meeting location — is it reasonably private? Quiet enough to talk?
 - Brought your journal (for notes immediately after)
-

During the Meeting

Remember the structure: 1. Introduction (5 min) — who you are, what this is, give them the floor 2. Get to know them (10-15 min) — open questions, listen, reflect 3. Set expectations (10 min) — what mentoring is and isn't, schedule, confidentiality 4. Mentoring Agreement (10 min) — review together, both sign 5. Close with a question (5 min) — leave them with something to think about

If the mentee is resistant or quiet: - Don't panic. Silence is not failure. - Lower expectations. If all you accomplish is a respectful introduction and they agree to meet again, that's enough. - Say: "I know you didn't ask for this. I'm not here to push anything on you. I just want to meet you and see if this is something that could be useful for you." - Don't take it personally. Their resistance is almost never about you.

If the mentee is overly eager: - Good — but stay boundaried. Don't let the first meeting run two hours because they want to tell you everything. - Gently redirect: "I want to hear all of this — and we'll have time. For today, let's focus on getting set up so we have a strong foundation."

If you have multiple mentees: - Take a 10-15 minute break between meetings. Use it to breathe, jot notes, and reset. Each mentee deserves your full presence — not the emotional residue from the last meeting.

Mentoring Log Template

Use this log for every mentee meeting throughout Phase 3. Fill it out immediately after each session — not at the end of the day, not the next morning. Your memory fades fast.

FORGE Mentoring Log

Mentor Name: _____

Mentee Name: _____

Date: ___ **Session #:** _____

Duration: _ minutes

Location: _____

What was the focus of today's meeting? (Brief summary — 2-3 sentences)

What did the mentee share or express? (Key themes, concerns, emotions — not a transcript)

What skills/techniques did you use? (Active listening, MI, conflict resolution, boundary-setting, etc.)

What went well?

What was challenging?

Are there any concerns? (Safety issues, mental health, boundary problems, disengagement — flag anything that needs to be brought to supervision)

- No concerns
- Concern to discuss in supervision: _____

Plan for next meeting: (What will you follow up on? What's the focus?)

Mentor's self-reflection (1-2 sentences): How did I show up today? What do I want to do differently next time?

Bring completed logs to Tuesday supervision. They are reviewed weekly.

Post-Meeting Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after all mentee meetings are done:

- 1. What was your first impression of each mentee? What surprised you?**
 - 2. Did the first meeting go the way you planned? What deviated from your plan, and how did you handle it?**
 - 3. What was the hardest moment? How did you respond — and how do you wish you had responded?**
 - 4. How did it feel to be on the other side — to be the mentor instead of the participant?**
 - 5. What do you need from Tuesday's supervision session? What question do you want answered?**
-
-

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 25

What to Watch For

Anxiety levels: Some participants will be so nervous they can barely function. Others will overcompensate with bravado. During Session 73, watch for who's shutting down and who's performing confidence they don't feel. Both need individual attention — a quiet word after the session: "You're going to be fine. Here's why I believe that."

Over-preparation vs. under-preparation: Some participants will try to script every word of their first meeting. Others will wing it because planning feels "fake." Push both toward the middle: "Have a structure, not a script. Know your steps, but be ready to follow the person."

First-meeting reports (Thursday evening/Friday): Check in with participants after their Thursday meetings if possible. The first mentee meeting is a high-emotion event. Some will feel great. Some will feel like they failed. Normalize both. "The fact that you showed up and tried is more than most people ever do."

Common Week 25 Challenges

"My mentee didn't talk." Normal. Some people need 2-3 meetings before they open up. Tell the participant: "You planted a seed. It didn't bloom in 45 minutes. That doesn't mean it's dead."

"My mentee talked too much and I couldn't get to the Mentoring Agreement." Also normal. Prioritize connection over paperwork. You can finish the agreement next week. The fact that the mentee felt comfortable enough to talk is a better sign than a signed form.

"I froze during co-facilitation." Expected for many. Debrief it gently. Ask what was happening internally. Remind them that freezing is a stress response — and they have tools for it. Next week will be better because they know what it feels like now.

"This is harder than the simulations." Yes. It is. Because real people don't follow scripts. Validate that insight — it's an important one. "The simulations gave you the skills. The field gives you the wisdom. You're in the wisdom phase now."

Co-Facilitation Observer Guidelines

The experienced mentor or facilitator observing the Wednesday co-facilitation should: - Sit where they can see the practitioner but not be the focal point of the room - Take notes on the observation form during the session - Not intervene unless there is a safety concern — let the practitioner struggle and recover - Give feedback using SBI immediately after (not the next day) - Lead with strengths before areas for growth - Be specific, not general ("You handled Marcus's challenge well by reflecting his feeling before responding" — not "Good job")

Preparation for Week 26

- Review each participant's mentoring logs from Thursday
- Note common themes and challenges to address in Session 76
- Prepare case presentation format for Week 26's supervision session
- Identify any participants who need additional support or a one-on-one check-in before Tuesday
- If any mentee matching issues arose (wrong fit, safety concerns), address them before Week 26

Week 26: When It's Not Going Well

Week 26 Overview

Purpose: The honeymoon is over. Week 25 was about beginnings — first meetings, first impressions, first attempts. Week 26 is about what happens when reality doesn't match expectations. Mentees who don't show up. Facilitating a group where nobody participates. Feeling unprepared for a question you should know the answer to. This week's supervision session is built entirely around real cases from the field — because the best training material is what actually happened.

Sessions This Week: - Session 76 (Tuesday): Supervision — Case Presentations and Group Problem-Solving - Session 77 (Wednesday): Field Work — Co-Facilitation Continues - Session 78 (Thursday): Field Work — Mentee Meetings Continue

Materials Needed: - Case Presentation Worksheet (1 per participant) - Mentoring Logs from Week 25 (participants bring their own) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle - Whiteboard or easel paper (if available) for group problem-solving

SESSION 76: Case Presentations and Group Problem-Solving

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor(s)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Present a mentoring challenge using the case presentation format 2. Identify common patterns in first-week mentoring difficulties 3. Apply group problem-solving to real situations from the field 4. Distinguish between problems they can solve and problems they need help with 5. Recognize boundary testing and respond without overreacting

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Welcome back. You've been out in the field for a week. Some of you had great first meetings. Some of you are wondering what you got yourself into. Either way — you're here, and you're doing it.

*Before we get into case presentations, let's check in. Talking piece. Two questions: **How did your first week go in one sentence? And what's the one thing you most need to talk about today?"***

Send the talking piece. Facilitator listens carefully and takes notes — the "one thing" responses will help prioritize which cases to spend the most time on.

Facilitator (after the round):

"I heard some common themes. [Name 2-3 — e.g., 'several of you mentioned mentees not showing up,' 'a few of you felt unprepared for the questions you got,' 'some of you are dealing with resistance.'] Good. That's exactly what today is for."

The Case Presentation Format (10 minutes)

Purpose: Teach participants how to present a challenge clearly and receive feedback constructively. This format will be used every Tuesday for the rest of Phase 3.

Facilitator:

"Every Tuesday, part of our supervision time will be case presentations. Here's how it works. Each presenter uses this format:"

Case Presentation Format (distribute worksheet):

*"1. **The Situation** (2 minutes max) What happened? Who was involved? When and where? Keep it factual — no interpretations yet.*

*2. **What I Did** (1 minute) How did you respond? What techniques did you use? What was the outcome?*

*3. **What I'm Stuck On** (1 minute) What's the question you can't answer? What are you unsure about? What do you need help with?*

*4. **Group Response** (5-8 minutes) The group asks clarifying questions, then offers suggestions. No judgment. No 'I would have done it better.' Just help.*

*5. **Presenter's Takeaway** (30 seconds) The presenter says what they're going to do next based on the feedback.*

Total: about 12 minutes per case. We can cover 4-5 cases today. Everyone will get a turn over the next few weeks."

Case Presentations (60 minutes)

Purpose: This is the core of the session. Real situations, real problem-solving.

Facilitator:

"Who wants to go first? Remember — bringing a problem to this group is not weakness. It's the smartest thing a mentor can do. The man who thinks he has all the answers is the most dangerous mentor in the building."

Facilitate 4-5 case presentations. Prioritize based on the opening circle — start with the most common or most urgent issue.

Facilitator's role during case presentations: - Keep time — don't let one case eat the whole session - Make sure the group gives actionable suggestions, not vague advice - Name the skill or technique that applies: "What

you're describing sounds like a boundary test. Remember B2 from simulation training?" - Connect individual cases to universal principles - Flag anything that needs referral or escalation

Common Week 1 cases you'll likely hear:

Case Type: "My mentee didn't show up"

Facilitator guidance:

"This is the most common challenge in mentoring — period. It's not personal. Don't chase. Don't guilt-trip. Find them, check in casually: 'Hey, we were supposed to meet Thursday. Everything okay?' If there's a practical barrier (work assignment, visit, forgot), problem-solve. If they're avoiding, use MI: 'It sounds like you're not sure this is for you. Tell me what's going on.'

The key: one missed meeting is data, not a crisis. Two in a row is a pattern that needs a conversation. Three is a supervision issue."

Case Type: "My mentee is testing my boundaries"

Facilitator guidance:

"Boundary testing is normal. It's actually a sign the mentee is engaged — he's figuring out what kind of person you are. The worst response is to be rigid and defensive. The second worst is to cave.

The right response is calm, clear, and kind: 'I hear what you're asking, and here's why I can't do that. But here's what I can do.' Hold the boundary, but offer an alternative. Every time you hold a boundary without being harsh, you build trust. Every single time."

Case Type: "I felt unprepared / didn't know what to say"

Facilitator guidance:

"Welcome to mentoring. The honest truth is you will never feel fully prepared. The question isn't 'Do I know enough?' The question is 'Am I present enough?' You don't need to have all the answers. You need to have the willingness to sit with someone in their uncertainty. That's mentoring.

When you don't know what to say, try: 'Tell me more about that.' It buys you time, it shows you're listening, and most of the time, the person just needs to keep talking."

Case Type: "My mentee is resistant / doesn't want to be there"

Facilitator guidance:

"Remember the stages of change from MI training. Your mentee might be in precontemplation — he doesn't even think he has a problem, let alone want your help. That's okay. Your job is not to convince him. Your job is to be the kind of person who makes him curious about change.

Use OARS. Roll with the resistance. Don't argue. Don't prove. Just be present. Some of the best mentoring relationships start with a mentee who didn't want to be there."

Case Type: "I got emotionally activated"

Facilitator guidance:

"We're going to go deeper on this next week — managing your own reactions. For now: if you got activated, that's information, not failure. What triggered you? What did it remind you of? Did you catch it in time, or did it spill into the interaction?

The goal isn't to never get activated. The goal is to notice it, regulate it, and not let it hijack the meeting. You have the skills for that."

Patterns and Principles (15 minutes)

Purpose: After the individual cases, zoom out and identify common threads.

Facilitator:

"Let's step back from the individual cases. What patterns do you see? What's coming up for the group as a whole?"

Facilitate a brief discussion. Then offer these principles:

"Here are five truths about mentoring that your first week just taught you:

One: It's slower than you think. *You want to help. You want to see progress. You want your mentee to have the breakthrough you had in Phase 1. It doesn't work that way. Change is slow. Trust is slow. Your job is to be patient enough to stay in it.*

Two: It's more about you than you expected. *Mentoring holds up a mirror. Every frustration with your mentee is telling you something about yourself. Every reaction is data. Phase 1 work doesn't stop just because you're in Phase 3.*

Three: The relationship IS the intervention. *You don't need a technique for every moment. Sometimes just showing up consistently, being honest, and caring — that's the whole thing. That's what most of these men have never had.*

Four: You're going to make mistakes. *You'll say the wrong thing. You'll miss a cue. You'll handle a situation badly. When that happens, own it, bring it to supervision, and do better next time. The only unforgivable mistake is pretending you don't make them.*

Five: You're not alone. *This group right here — these men who are going through the same thing you are — they're your lifeline. Use them. Check in with each other between Tuesdays. Talk about what's happening. That's what a cohort is for."*

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Before Wednesday, review your session plan with your co-facilitator. Before Thursday, review your mentoring logs from last week and set a specific goal for each mentee meeting: 'This week, I want to focus on ____.'"

*Closing round. Talking piece: **What's one thing you heard today from another presenter that you can use in your own mentoring?**"*

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (closing):

"You survived your first week. You brought your struggles to this room instead of pretending everything was fine. That's what strong mentors do. Keep going.

Service Over Self. See you in the field."

Session 76 Checklist

- Opening circle completed — one-sentence week review and needs identified
 - Case presentation format taught and distributed
 - 4-5 case presentations completed with group feedback
 - Common themes identified and discussed
 - Five mentoring truths shared
 - Mentoring logs reviewed (spot-check during session or after)
 - Closing circle completed
 - Participants reminded to prep for Wednesday co-facilitation and Thursday mentee meetings
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SESSION 77: Field Work — Co-Facilitation

Continues

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (session) + preparation and debrief time **Structure:** Co-facilitation with experienced FORGE mentor observing (same structure as Week 25)

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Co-facilitated their second real session 2. Applied at least one improvement from last week's feedback 3. Demonstrated greater comfort with the facilitator role 4. Continued building relationship with the group they're facilitating

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

- Reviewed observer feedback from last week — identified one specific area to improve
 - Reviewed session plan with co-facilitator (at least 30 minutes before)
 - Discussed roles and transitions
 - Materials prepared
 - Identified your improvement goal for today: "This week I'm working on ___"
 - Shared your goal with your observer so they can watch for it
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed
 - Grounding word identified
-

Post-Session Debrief (with observer)

Same SBI format as Week 25. Additional focus this week:

Observer specifically addresses: 1. Did the participant improve in the area they identified? 2. How did the participant handle unexpected moments compared to last week? 3. What's the next growth edge for Week 27?

Participant reflects: 1. What was different about this week compared to last week? 2. Did you achieve your improvement goal? What evidence? 3. What felt more natural this time? 4. What's still uncomfortable?

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after the session:

1. **Compare this week's co-facilitation to last week's. What shifted? What felt easier? What's still hard?**
 2. **Describe a moment where you had to make a real-time decision — something that wasn't in the plan. What did you do? Would you do it again?**
 3. **What are you learning about the difference between knowing the material and teaching the material?**
 4. **How is your relationship with your co-facilitator developing? Are you communicating well? What could be better?**
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SESSION 78: Field Work — Mentee Meetings

Continue

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 45-60 minutes per mentee **Structure:** Continued 1-on-1 meetings with assigned mentees

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Conducted second meetings with each assigned mentee 2. Followed up on items from the first meeting 3. Begun building toward regular meeting structure and rhythm 4. Logged all meetings in the Mentoring Log (use template from Week 25)

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

- Reviewed Mentoring Log from last week's meeting with this mentee
 - Identified follow-up items: What did you talk about? What did you promise to come back to?
 - Set a specific goal for today's meeting with each mentee
 - If mentee missed last week: plan for how to re-engage without guilt-tripping
 - If Mentoring Agreement wasn't completed last week: bring forms to finish today
 - Reviewed relevant skills: MI, active listening, boundary maintenance
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed before each meeting
-

Meeting Guidance for Week 2

This week's focus: Building rhythm and going slightly deeper.

The first meeting was about introductions. The second meeting is about showing you meant it. Show up on time. Remember what they told you last week. Reference it: "Last week you mentioned _____. How's that going?"

Begin introducing light structure to the meetings:

1. **Check-in** (5 min): "How's your week been? Anything on your mind?"
2. **Follow-up** (10 min): Revisit something from last meeting
3. **Today's focus** (20-30 min): Could be a topic they raise, a FORGE concept, or just an honest conversation
4. **Close** (5 min): "What's one thing you're taking away from today? What should we talk about next week?"

Don't force it. If the conversation flows naturally, follow it. The structure is a safety net, not a cage.

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after all mentee meetings:

1. **Did your mentee remember you? Did they seem more or less comfortable than last week? What tells you that?**
2. **What did you follow up on from the first meeting? How did the mentee respond to you remembering?**
3. **Were there any boundary moments this week? How did you handle them?**
4. **What's one thing you're learning about each mentee that you didn't know after the first meeting?**
5. **What do you want to bring to supervision on Tuesday?**

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 26

What to Watch For

Case presentation dynamics: Watch who presents and who doesn't. The participants who are silent may be the ones struggling most. After the session, check in individually: "I noticed you didn't present today. Everything good, or is there something you'd rather talk about one-on-one?"

Comparison and competition: Some participants will compare their mentoring to others' — "His mentee is way easier than mine." Address this if it surfaces: "Every mentoring relationship is different. Comparing your chapter 2 to someone else's chapter 2 is pointless. The only comparison that matters is you today versus you last week."

Discouragement: Some participants will be discouraged after Week 1. They expected it to feel rewarding and it felt awkward or frustrating. Normalize this aggressively. "The most meaningful work in the world doesn't feel good every day. It feels hard most days and meaningful when you look back."

Mentoring log quality: Review logs carefully. Participants who write one-word answers are either disengaged or struggling to reflect. Coach them: "Your log is for you as much as it is for me. The more honestly you fill it out, the more useful supervision becomes."

Common Week 26 Challenges

"I don't have anything to present." Either everything is going perfectly (unlikely) or they're not reflecting deeply enough. Push gently: "Tell me about your Thursday meeting. Walk me through it minute by minute." Something will surface.

"My mentee likes me too much." Attachment can be a good sign but also a boundary issue. Coach: "Liking you is fine. Depending on you is a concern. You're building their capacity, not their reliance on you."

"I'm second-guessing everything I say." Normal at this stage. The cure is practice, not reassurance. "The overthinking will fade. Keep doing the work. Your instincts are better than you think — you just don't trust them yet."

Preparation for Week 27

- Prepare Session 79 materials on managing reactions and secondary stress
- Review all mentoring logs from Weeks 25-26 — look for patterns in what's triggering participants
- Consider whether any mentee reassignments are needed based on Week 25-26 experiences
- Have self-care resources ready: what's actually available in this facility?

Week 27: Managing Your Own Reactions

Week 27 Overview

Purpose: Two weeks into field work, participants are beginning to discover something uncomfortable: mentoring activates their own stuff. A mentee's story triggers a memory. A resistant mentee makes them want to force compliance. A struggling mentee makes them want to rescue. The parallel process principle from Week 13 — "you can't give what you don't have" — becomes viscerally real. This week's supervision session tackles the hardest part of being a mentor: managing yourself while you're trying to help someone else.

Sessions This Week: - Session 79 (Tuesday): Supervision — Triggers, Reactions, and Secondary Stress - Session 80 (Wednesday): Field Work — Begin Leading with Observation - Session 81 (Thursday): Field Work — Mentee Meetings

Materials Needed: - Self-Care Assessment Worksheet (1 per participant) - Trigger Mapping Exercise (1 per participant) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle

Important Shift This Week: On Wednesday, the facilitation dynamic changes. Participants begin leading sessions with the experienced mentor observing but NOT co-leading. The participant is the primary facilitator. The observer is there for safety and feedback only — they do not step in unless there is a genuine safety concern. This is a significant step toward independence.

SESSION 79: Triggers, Reactions, and Secondary Stress

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor(s)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Identify their personal triggers in the mentoring context 2. Distinguish between their mentee's emotions and their own 3. Describe at least three signs of secondary stress 4. Name two practical self-care strategies they can use this week 5. Recognize the "savior trap" and the "mirror trap" in mentoring

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Today's check-in is going to be a little different. I don't want to hear about your mentees yet. I want to hear about you.

*Talking piece. The question: **How are YOU doing** — not how your mentoring is going, but how are you, as a person, doing right now?"*

Send the talking piece. Facilitator goes first and models genuine self-reflection — not "I'm fine."

Facilitator (after the round):

"I asked about you on purpose. Because today's session isn't about what's happening with your mentees. It's about what's happening inside you. And if you can't answer that question honestly, you can't mentor effectively. Period."

The Parallel Process — Revisited (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"In Week 13, we talked about the parallel process: you can't give what you don't have. You studied it as a concept. Now you're living it.

*Two weeks into field work, some of you are discovering something that every mentor discovers: **this work brings your own stuff to the surface**. Not because you're doing it wrong. Because you're doing it right. When you listen deeply to another person's pain, your own pain wakes up. When you sit with someone who's struggling in ways you struggled, your body remembers.*

This isn't a defect. It's the cost of doing meaningful work with other human beings. The question is: what are you going to do about it?"

Trigger Mapping (20 minutes)

Purpose: Help participants identify what specifically activates them in their mentoring work.

Facilitator:

"A trigger is anything that causes a disproportionate emotional reaction — something that hits you harder than the situation warrants. In mentoring, triggers usually fall into three categories."

Three categories of mentoring triggers:

***Category 1: The Mirror.** Your mentee reminds you of yourself. His story sounds like your story. His thinking errors look like your old thinking errors. His pain is familiar. When this happens, you're not just mentoring him — you're reliving your own experience. And that can cloud your judgment. You might push too hard because you know where his path leads. You might avoid a topic because it's still raw for you. You might over-identify — and lose the boundary between his journey and yours.*

***Category 2: The Opposite.** Your mentee does something that violates your values. He disrespects someone the way you used to. He makes excuses you've worked hard to stop making. He reminds you of people who hurt you. The reaction is frustration, judgment, sometimes anger. You want to shake him and say, 'Can't you see what you're doing?' That's not mentoring. That's your own unfinished business talking.*

***Category 3: The Brick Wall.** Your mentee doesn't respond. Doesn't change. Doesn't seem to care. You pour energy into the relationship and get nothing back. And something inside you says: 'I'm not enough. I'm failing. I'm a fraud.' That's the deepest trigger of all — because it touches your worth, not just your skills."*

Trigger Mapping Exercise (10 min):

"In your journal, I want you to map your triggers. Be specific.

1. **Mirror triggers:** *What in your mentees' stories or behaviors reminds you of your own past? Write at least two examples from the last two weeks.*
2. **Opposite triggers:** *What has a mentee done or said that made you feel frustrated, angry, or judgmental? What was really behind that reaction?*
3. **Brick wall triggers:** *When have you felt ineffective, like you're not making a difference? What does that feeling connect to in your history?*

Be honest. This isn't for sharing — unless you want to."

Optional sharing (5 min): Ask if anyone is willing to share one trigger they identified. Acknowledge courage. Do not probe or interpret.

The Savior Trap and the Fixer Trap (15 minutes)

Purpose: Address the two most common dysfunctional patterns in new mentors.

Facilitator:

"When your mentoring activates your own stuff, it usually shows up in one of two ways. I call them the Savior Trap and the Fixer Trap."

The Savior Trap:

"The Savior Trap sounds like this in your head: 'I have to save this person. If I don't help him, nobody will. His whole future depends on me.'

Sounds noble, right? It's not. It's ego wrapped in compassion. When you need to save someone, you're making their journey about you. You're putting yourself at the center of their story. And here's the dangerous part: when they don't get 'saved' — when they keep struggling, when they make bad choices, when they relapse — you either burn out or you blame them. Neither helps.

*The antidote to the Savior Trap is this truth: **You are not responsible for your mentee's choices. You are responsible for showing up consistently, being honest, and offering what you have. What they do with it is on them.***

That's not cold. That's respectful. It says, 'I trust you enough to let you make your own decisions — even the bad ones.'"

The Fixer Trap:

"The Fixer Trap is related but different. It sounds like: 'I can see the problem clearly. If he would just listen to me, if he would just do what I'm telling him, everything would be fine.'

The Fixer gives advice. Lots of advice. Unsolicited advice. The Fixer talks more than he listens. The Fixer gets frustrated when his advice isn't followed. The Fixer treats mentoring like a repair job — find the broken part, replace it, done.

The problem: people are not engines. You can't fix someone. You can walk alongside them while they figure it out. You can ask questions that help them see what they can't see. You can model a different way of living. But you cannot fix another human being. And trying to will exhaust you and alienate them.

The antidote to the Fixer Trap: **Ask, don't tell. Listen, don't lecture. Be curious, not certain.** Every time you feel the urge to give advice, ask a question instead. 'What do you think would happen if you tried ?' **is ten times more powerful than 'You should do.'**"

Quick reflection (3 min):

"Be honest with yourself right now. In the last two weeks — have you fallen into the Savior Trap, the Fixer Trap, or both? Write one sentence in your journal."

Secondary Stress: The Cost of Caring (15 minutes)

Purpose: Introduce the concept of secondary traumatic stress and normalize its presence in mentoring work.

Facilitator:

"There's a term used in social work and counseling: secondary traumatic stress. It means the stress you absorb from being close to someone else's pain. Counselors get it. Social workers get it. First responders get it. And mentors get it.

You're sitting with men who have been through hell. You're hearing about abuse, neglect, violence, loss, shame — things that would break most people. And because you're doing your job right — because you're actually listening, actually caring — some of that weight transfers to you.

This is not weakness. This is the occupational hazard of caring about other people."

Signs of secondary stress (go through each):

"Watch for these in yourself:

1. **Sleep changes.** *Trouble falling asleep, or sleeping too much. Nightmares — especially about situations your mentees described.*
2. **Irritability.** *Snapping at people over nothing. Being short-tempered in your dorm. Things that didn't bother you last month suddenly drive you crazy.*
3. **Emotional numbing.** *Feeling like you can't feel anything. Going through the motions. Not caring about things you used to care about.*
4. **Hypervigilance.** *Feeling on edge. Scanning for problems everywhere. Can't relax.*
5. **Avoidance.** *Not wanting to meet with your mentees. Dreading Thursday. Finding reasons to cancel or cut meetings short.*
6. **Cynicism.** *'This doesn't work.' 'Nobody really changes.' 'Why am I bothering?' — especially if you didn't feel this way before you started mentoring.*
7. **Physical symptoms.** *Headaches, stomach problems, tension in your body, fatigue.*

If you're experiencing two or more of these consistently, you're not just tired — you're carrying too much. And you need to address it before it affects your mentoring and your well-being."

Self-Care in a Prison: What's Actually Possible (15 minutes)

Purpose: Get practical. Self-care advice is often designed for people with freedom, money, and choices. This discussion is about what's available here.

Facilitator:

"I know what you're thinking: 'Self-care? In here?' I get it. You can't go for a hike. You can't take a spa day. You can't even close a door for privacy most of the time.

But self-care isn't about luxury. It's about intentionally doing things that restore you. And some of those things are available even here."

Practical self-care strategies (discuss each — ask participants for their own):

Physical: - Exercise. Whatever you have access to — push-ups, walking the yard, stretching. Movement processes stress better than thinking does. - Sleep discipline. Same time to bed, same time up. No exceptions. - Eating as well as you can with what's available.

Mental: - Journaling. You already do this — but be honest about what's weighing on you, not just your mentoring observations. - Reading. Books that feed your mind, not just pass time. - Learning something new. Languages, art, math — anything that engages a different part of your brain than mentoring does.

Relational: - Talking to someone. Not about mentoring — about you. A cohort member, a friend, a chaplain. - Writing letters home. Staying connected to people who care about you. - Asking for help when you need it. In this room. From me. From each other.

Spiritual (however you define that): - Prayer, meditation, mindfulness — whatever practice grounds you. - Time alone. Even 10 minutes of intentional silence. - Gratitude practice. Name three things. Every night. It sounds simple because it is — and it works.

Boundary-based: - Saying no to extra obligations when you're depleted. - Not processing mentoring problems after 8 PM. Give your brain a cutoff. - Reminding yourself: 'I am not my mentees' only resource. If I burn out, I help nobody.'"

Self-Care Assessment (5 min):

"Quick assessment. In your journal, rate yourself 1-5 on each area: physical self-care, mental self-care, relational self-care, spiritual self-care. Be honest. Where are you strongest? Where are you neglecting yourself?

Now pick one area where you scored lowest. Write down one specific thing you will do this week to address it. Not five things. One. Commit to it."

Case Presentations (15 minutes)

Purpose: Brief round of case presentations to maintain the weekly rhythm.

Facilitator:

"We have time for 1-2 quick case presentations. Who has something from the field that connects to what we talked about today — a moment where your own reactions got in the way, or where you noticed secondary stress showing up?"

Facilitate 1-2 case presentations using the standard format from Week 26.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Today was about you — not your mentees. That's not selfish. It's essential. The best mentors in the world — therapists, counselors, coaches — they all have one thing in common: they take care of themselves so they can take care of others. You don't get a pass on that because you're incarcerated. If anything, it matters more, because you have fewer resources and higher stress.

This week on Wednesday, the dynamic changes. Your observer will not co-lead with you. You'll lead the session. They'll watch. This is a big step. You're ready — and you're going to feel like you're not. Both things can be true.

*Closing round. Talking piece: **What's one thing you're going to do this week to take care of yourself?** Be specific."*

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (closing):

"Take care of yourselves. That's not optional — it's part of the job. A burnt-out mentor is no good to anyone, especially himself.

Service Over Self doesn't mean destroying yourself in the process. It means being healthy enough to serve. See you in the field."

Session 79 Checklist

- Opening circle completed — focus on personal well-being, not mentoring updates
- Parallel process revisited and connected to field experience
- Trigger mapping exercise completed (mirror, opposite, brick wall)
- Savior Trap and Fixer Trap discussed with reflection
- Secondary stress signs reviewed (7 signs)
- Self-care strategies discussed — specific to prison environment
- Self-care assessment completed — one commitment made
- 1-2 case presentations completed
- Wednesday transition explained (leading with observation, not co-facilitation)
- Closing circle completed — self-care commitment shared



SESSION 80: Field Work — Leading with Observation

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (session) + preparation and debrief time **Structure:** Participant leads the session independently. Experienced FORGE mentor observes but does NOT co-facilitate.

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Led a full session as the primary and sole facilitator 2. Made real-time decisions without a co-facilitator to lean on 3. Managed their anxiety about leading alone 4. Received feedback from their observer on independent facilitation skills

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

- Session plan prepared FULLY — you don't have a co-facilitator to cover gaps this week
 - All materials ready before you enter the room
 - Reviewed the session plan at least twice — know the flow, not just the content
 - Prepared for "what if" moments: What if no one talks? What if someone gets emotional? What if there's a disruption?
 - Discussed with your observer: When will they step in? (Answer: only if there's a safety concern)
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed
 - Self-care strategy from Tuesday's session practiced at least once today
 - Reminded yourself: "I've been trained. I've practiced. I know how to do this."
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During the Session

This week is different. You're alone up there. Your observer is in the room, but they are invisible. They will not help you transition between activities. They will not rescue a quiet moment. They will not manage a difficult participant. That's all you.

Remember: - Own the room. You set the tone when you walk in. Stand tall. Speak clearly. Make eye contact. - Use silence intentionally. When no one responds to a question, don't panic and fill the space. Count to ten in your head. Someone will speak. - If you lose your place, breathe. Glance at your session plan. Take a sip of water. Nobody notices a 5-second pause as much as you think they do. - If something goes sideways — a disruption, an emotional moment, a conflict — remember your training. You've simulated this. Trust your skills. - It will feel harder than co-facilitation. That's normal. You're growing.

Post-Session Debrief (with observer)

Observer gives feedback with special attention to: 1. How did the participant manage the room alone? Confidence, presence, authority? 2. How did they handle transitions without a co-facilitator cuing them? 3. Were there moments where they struggled? How did they recover? 4. What is their biggest strength as an independent facilitator? 5. What is the one thing that would most improve their independent facilitation?

Participant reflects: 1. How did it feel to lead alone? What was different from co-facilitation? 2. What moment are you most proud of? 3. What moment do you wish you could redo? 4. On a scale of 1-10, how confident do you feel about leading again next week?

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after the session:

1. **Describe the moment you realized you were on your own — that your co-facilitator wasn't going to step in. How did that feel? What did you do with that feeling?**
 2. **What did you do well that you didn't know you could do until you had to?**
 3. **Were there any moments where your own reactions (triggers, frustration, anxiety) affected how you facilitated? How did you manage them?**
 4. **What's one thing you want to practice or prepare differently for next Wednesday?**
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SESSION 81: Field Work — Mentee Meetings

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 45-60 minutes per mentee **Structure:** Continued 1-on-1 meetings with assigned mentees

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Conducted their third week of mentee meetings 2. Noticed and managed their own emotional reactions during meetings 3. Practiced self-awareness techniques from Session 79 4. Logged all meetings in the Mentoring Log (template from Week 25)

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

- Reviewed Mentoring Log from last week's meeting with each mentee
 - Identified follow-up items from each previous meeting
 - Set a specific goal for each meeting
 - Reflected on Session 79: Am I falling into the Savior Trap or the Fixer Trap with any mentee?
 - Identified potential trigger points for today's meetings and planned how to manage them
 - Self-care practice completed before meetings
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed before each meeting
-

Meeting Guidance for Week 3

This week's added focus: Self-awareness during the meeting.

In addition to the regular meeting structure (check-in, follow-up, focus, close), add one layer this week: notice yourself.

During each meeting, check in with yourself at least once: - What am I feeling right now? - Am I listening, or am I planning my response? - Is this reaction about my mentee, or about me? - Am I trying to fix something? Should I be asking instead of telling?

You don't need to share this self-check with your mentee. Just notice. And write about it in your log.

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after all mentee meetings:

- 1. Did you notice any trigger moments during today's meetings? What triggered you? How did you handle it?**
- 2. Were you in the Savior Trap or the Fixer Trap with any mentee today? What did that look like?**
- 3. How are you feeling after today's meetings — physically, emotionally, mentally? Use the secondary stress checklist from Session 79.**
- 4. What self-care will you do tonight?**
- 5. What do you want to bring to Tuesday's mid-point check-in?**

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 27

What to Watch For

Emotional responses during Session 79: This session can be heavy. Talking about triggers and secondary stress may activate the very things you're discussing. Watch for participants who go quiet, who get agitated, or who dismiss the topic ("I'm fine, I don't need self-care"). All of these are signals.

The dismissers: Some participants will resist the self-care conversation because it feels "soft" or because self-care is associated with vulnerability — which feels dangerous in prison. Don't argue with them. Just plant the seed: "The toughest men I've met are the ones who know when they need to stop. Pushing through everything isn't strength — sometimes it's just stubbornness."

Wednesday transition anxiety: Moving from co-facilitation to leading with observation is a major step. Some participants will be visibly anxious. Check in with them individually before Wednesday if possible. "You've been training for six months. You're not being thrown in — you're stepping up."

Over-functioning mentors: By Week 3, some participants may be doing too much for their mentees — running errands, intervening in disputes on their behalf, spending extra time. These are boundary issues and potential Savior Trap indicators. Address them in supervision or one-on-one.

Common Week 27 Challenges

"I can't separate my stuff from my mentee's stuff." This is the core challenge of mentoring. Coach: "You don't have to separate perfectly. You just have to notice. When you catch yourself thinking 'I felt the same way' — pause. Ask yourself: 'Am I responding to what he's feeling, or what I'm feeling?' That awareness is enough."

"I don't have time for self-care." Challenge this directly: "Self-care isn't an extra activity you add to your schedule. It's choosing to go to sleep on time instead of staying up worrying. It's taking three deep breaths between mentee meetings. It's talking to someone when you're struggling. You have time for all of those."

"My mentee told me something that really shook me." This will happen. If a participant is carrying something heavy from a mentee meeting, don't let it wait until Tuesday. Pull them aside: "Tell me what happened. Are you okay? Is your mentee safe? What do you need right now?" Determine if there's a referral need (mental health, safety) and provide support.

Preparation for Week 28

- Prepare Mid-Point Review forms for each participant
- Review all mentoring logs from Weeks 25-27 — prepare written feedback
- Review co-facilitation/observation notes from Weeks 25-27
- Identify areas of strength and areas for growth for each participant
- Prepare community circle introduction for Thursday of Week 28
- Calculate mentoring hours logged to date — are participants on track for the 60-hour requirement?

Week 28: Mid-Point Check-In

Week 28 Overview

Purpose: Week 28 marks the midpoint of Phase 3. Participants have been in the field for four weeks — long enough to have real data on how they're doing, what's working, and what needs to change. This week is about honest assessment: not grades, not judgment, but a clear-eyed look at where each person stands. The supervision session is a formal mid-point review. The Thursday field work introduces a new responsibility: the first community circle in their assigned dorm.

Sessions This Week: - Session 82 (Tuesday): Supervision — Mid-Point Review - Session 83 (Wednesday): Field Work — Leading with Observation - Session 84 (Thursday): Field Work — Mentee Meetings + First Community Circle

Materials Needed: - Mid-Point Self-Assessment Form (1 per participant) - Facilitator Feedback Form (1 per participant — completed by facilitator in advance) - Mentoring Logs from Weeks 25-27 (participants bring theirs; facilitator has reviewed copies) - Mentoring Hours Tracker (1 per participant) - Community Circle Planning Template (1 per participant) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle

SESSION 82: Mid-Point Review

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor(s)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Honestly assess their own performance across the first four weeks of Phase 3 2. Receive feedback without defensiveness and incorporate it into a growth plan 3. Identify their top strength and their most critical area for development 4. Set 2-3 specific goals for the remaining eight weeks 5. Articulate what they need from supervision to reach their goals

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"We're at the midpoint of Phase 3. Four weeks in, eight weeks to go. Today is about taking stock — honestly. Not performing. Not pretending everything is great. Not catastrophizing everything that's hard. Just looking clearly at where you are.

*Talking piece. Short check-in: **One word that describes your mentoring right now.**"*

Send the talking piece. Keep it brief. The session is dense — you need the time for reviews.

The Mid-Point Self-Assessment (20 minutes)

Purpose: Participants evaluate themselves before receiving facilitator feedback.

Facilitator:

"Before I share any of my observations, I want to hear yours. You're going to complete a self-assessment right now. This is the same honesty muscle you've been building since Week 1. Use it."

Distribute the Mid-Point Self-Assessment Form. Participants complete it in writing (15 min).

Mid-Point Self-Assessment Form

Name: ___ Date: ___

Instructions: Rate yourself honestly on each area (1 = significant struggle, 3 = developing, 5 = strong). Then write a brief explanation.

A. Mentee Relationships

___ Building trust with mentees

Explain: _____

___ Maintaining appropriate boundaries

Explain: _____

___ Using active listening and MI skills consistently

Explain: _____

___ Following through on commitments to mentees

Explain: _____

B. Facilitation Skills

___ Confidence leading/co-leading sessions

Explain: _____

___ Managing group dynamics (quiet members, disruptors, emotional moments)

Explain: _____

___ Adapting in real time when the plan isn't working

Explain: _____

___ Closing sessions clearly with takeaways and next steps

Explain: _____

C. Self-Management

___ Awareness of my own triggers during mentoring

Explain: _____

___ Managing my emotional reactions without letting them spill

Explain: _____

___ Practicing self-care consistently

Explain: _____

___ Avoiding the Savior Trap and the Fixer Trap

Explain: _____

D. Professional Practice

___ Keeping mentoring logs complete and on time

Explain: _____

___ Using supervision effectively (presenting cases, asking for help)

Explain: _____

___ Showing up prepared for every session and meeting

Explain: _____

___ Maintaining FORGE standards in and out of sessions

Explain: _____

E. Overall Reflection

What is your greatest strength as a mentor right now?

What is the area where you most need to grow?

What has surprised you most about mentoring in the field?

What do you need from supervision for the remaining 8 weeks?

Facilitator (after 15 min):

"Hold onto your self-assessment. We're going to use it in a few minutes."

Mentoring Log Review (15 minutes)

Purpose: Review the mentoring logs as a group — not to embarrass anyone, but to reinforce the practice and identify patterns.

Facilitator:

"Let's talk about your logs. I've reviewed every log submitted from Weeks 25 through 27. Here's what I'm seeing across the group."

Share general observations — not individual call-outs:

- Quality patterns: Are logs detailed or surface-level? Are self-reflections honest?
- Consistency: Is everyone logging every meeting? Are there gaps?
- Concerns flagged: Are people using the "concerns" section, or leaving it blank every time?
- Plans for next meeting: Are people writing real plans or generic ones?

Facilitator:

"Your mentoring log is not busywork. It's the record that proves you were there, that you were paying attention, and that you were growing. When you sit in front of the certification review board in eight weeks, these logs are evidence. More importantly — they're the tool that helps you be a better mentor week over week. If you write 'meeting went fine' every Thursday, you're not using it. 'Meeting went fine' tells you nothing when you look back at it.

Write like you're coaching yourself. Because you are."

Distribute the Mentoring Hours Tracker:

"You should also know where you stand on hours. Certification requires 60 hours of documented mentoring and facilitation. I've calculated your hours through Week 27. Take a look. If you're behind, we need to talk about how to get on track."

Give participants a moment to review their hours. Address any who are significantly behind individually after the session.

Individual Feedback Conversations (40 minutes)

Purpose: This is the most important part of the session. Each participant receives direct, honest feedback from the facilitator.

Facilitator:

"For the next part of the session, I'm going to meet briefly with each of you individually — about 4-5 minutes each. While you're waiting, I want you to do two things:

- 1. Review your self-assessment and your mentoring logs side by side. Do they tell the same story?*
- 2. Start drafting your goals for the remaining eight weeks — at least two specific, measurable goals.*

While I'm meeting with people, Senior Mentor [name] will be available if you want to talk through your goals."

Individual conversations (4-5 minutes each):

The facilitator meets with each participant using the Facilitator Feedback Form, which has been completed in advance based on observation notes, mentoring log reviews, and co-facilitation/observation reports.

Facilitator Feedback Conversation Structure:

- 1. Start with strengths (1 min):** *"Here's what I see you doing well..." — Be specific. Reference actual moments: "In your Week 26 session, when the group went quiet, you held the silence for a full 15 seconds before asking a follow-up question. That takes discipline."*
- 2. Growth areas (1-2 min):** *"Here's where I think you need to grow..." — Be direct but kind. Connect to observable behavior, not character. "Your logs show a pattern of giving advice rather than asking questions. In three of your last four meetings, you wrote that you 'told' your mentee what to do. How does that match what you know about MI?"*
- 3. Compare with self-assessment (1 min):** *"You rated yourself ___ on . **I would have rated you** . Here's why..." — Where participant and facilitator agree, affirm. Where they disagree, explore: "You rated yourself a 4 on boundaries. I'd say 3. Here's what I'm seeing that makes me say that."*
- 4. Goals discussion (1 min):** *"Based on all this, what are your goals for the next eight weeks?" — Help them make goals specific. Not "be a better listener" but "Ask at least three open-ended questions per mentee meeting and note them in my log."*

If the conversation reveals a serious concern: - A participant who is struggling significantly may need a modified plan - This could include additional observation, more frequent check-ins, or in rare cases, a

conversation about readiness - Handle with dignity: "I believe in your potential. I also believe you need more support in _____. Here's what I'm proposing."

Important: Keep to time. If you have 10 participants, 4-5 minutes each takes 40-50 minutes. Have a timer. Participants who need more conversation can meet with you after the session.

Goal-Setting and Group Sharing (15 minutes)

Purpose: Participants set goals publicly and commit to them.

Facilitator (after all individual conversations):

"You've assessed yourself. You've heard my feedback. Now — what are you going to do about it?"

Finalize 2-3 specific goals for the remaining eight weeks. Write them down. Make them concrete enough that we could measure them."

Give 5 minutes to finalize goals.

Examples of good goals: - "Ask at least three open-ended questions per mentee meeting and document them in my log." - "Practice 4-4-4 breathing before every field session for the next four weeks." - "Present at least one case in supervision every other Tuesday." - "Complete my mentoring logs within one hour of each meeting, not the next day." - "Hold at least one minute of silence per facilitation session instead of filling every pause."

Go-around (10 min): Each participant shares one goal with the group.

Facilitator (after all have shared):

"Write these down. I will too. We'll revisit them at Week 32. That's your next check-in. Between now and then — pursue these goals like they matter. Because they do."

Community Circle Introduction (10 minutes)

Purpose: Preview Thursday's new responsibility.

Facilitator:

"One more thing before we close. This Thursday, in addition to your regular mentee meetings, you're going to run your first community circle in your assigned dorm.

This is different from your facilitation sessions. A community circle isn't a class. It's not a lesson. It's a restorative practice — an opportunity for the men in your dorm to sit in a circle, check in with each other, and build the kind of culture that makes everyone safer.

You learned circle keeping in Week 21. Now you do it for real."

Distribute the Community Circle Planning Template.

"Use this template to plan your first circle. Keep it simple. The format:

- 1. **Opening** (3 min): Welcome, explain the circle process, ground rules (talking piece, speak from the heart, listen from the heart)*
- 2. **Check-in round** (10-15 min): One question — keep it accessible. 'How's your week going?' 'What's one thing on your mind right now?'*
- 3. **Topic round** (15-20 min): One question that invites reflection. 'What's one thing that would make this dorm better for everyone?' or 'What does respect look like in this space?'*
- 4. **Closing round** (5 min): 'One word for how you're feeling right now.'*

*Total: 30-45 minutes. Don't overshoot. Your first circle, the goal is simple: **people show up, people speak, people listen, nobody gets hurt.** That's a win.*

A few practical realities:

- Not everyone will come. That's fine. Even 5-6 people is a circle.*
- Some people will mock it. Don't react. Run the circle with whoever's willing.*
- Some people will test the talking piece rule. Gently enforce it: 'I hear you — grab the piece when it comes around and share that.'*
- You're going to feel exposed. A facilitation session has a lesson plan to hide behind. A circle has nothing but you, a talking piece, and a question. That's why it's powerful."*

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Four weeks done. You've met your mentees. You've facilitated real sessions. You've dealt with resistance, silence, boundary tests, and your own reactions. You've done everything we asked of you — and you're still standing.

The back half of Phase 3 is where you stop being a practitioner and start being a mentor. The difference? A practitioner follows the plan. A mentor reads the room and does what's needed. You're crossing that line now.

*Closing round. Talking piece: **Knowing what you know now — four weeks in — complete this sentence: "The kind of mentor I'm becoming is..."***

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (closing):

"Hold onto what you just said. Compare it to the commitment you made in Week 1, Session 3. Write them both down tonight. See how far you've come.

Wednesday — leading with observation. Thursday — mentee meetings and your first community circle.

You're halfway home. Keep forging.

Service Over Self."

Session 82 Checklist

- Opening circle completed
- Mid-Point Self-Assessment forms distributed and completed
- Mentoring logs reviewed — general observations shared with group
- Mentoring Hours Trackers distributed — each participant knows their total
- Individual feedback conversations completed with each participant (4-5 min each)
- Goals finalized and shared with group (2-3 per participant)
- Community Circle Planning Template distributed and explained
- First community circle expectations set for Thursday
- Closing circle completed
- Any participants needing additional support identified for follow-up

SESSION 83: Field Work — Leading with Observation

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (session) + preparation and debrief time **Structure:** Participant leads the session independently. Observer present but not co-facilitating.

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Led their second independent session (with observer) 2. Incorporated feedback from mid-point review into their facilitation 3. Demonstrated progress toward at least one of their stated goals 4. Continued building confidence as an independent facilitator

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist

- Session plan fully prepared — reviewed at least twice
 - Materials ready
 - Reviewed mid-point feedback: What's the one thing I'm working on today?
 - Reviewed goals set in Session 82: How will I practice my goal during this session?
 - Discussed with observer: What should they watch for today based on my goals?
 - Self-care practice completed
 - 4-4-4 breathing completed
 - "What if" scenarios mentally rehearsed
-

Post-Session Debrief (with observer)

This week, the debrief should reference the mid-point review:

Observer addresses: 1. Did the participant demonstrate improvement in their identified growth area? 2. What evidence of goal progress did you observe? 3. What remains the priority for development?

Participant reflects: 1. Which of my goals from Session 82 did I practice today? How did it go? 2. What felt different about this session compared to last Wednesday? 3. Where do I still feel uncertain? 4. What do I want to work on next week?

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after the session:

1. **How did the mid-point feedback show up in today's session? Were you more aware of your growth areas?**
2. **Describe a moment where you made a choice as a facilitator — not just followed the plan, but actually chose how to respond to something in the moment. What did you choose and why?**
3. **Are you starting to develop your own facilitation style? What does it look like? How is it different from how you were taught?**
4. **Rate your confidence as an independent facilitator on a scale of 1-10. What would move you up one point?**

SESSION 84: Field Work — Mentee Meetings + First Community Circle

Day: Thursday **Duration:** Mentee meetings (45-60 min each) + Community circle (30-45 min) **Structure:** Regular mentee meetings followed by the first community circle in assigned dorm

Field Work Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will have: 1. Continued mentee meetings with focus on mid-point adjustments 2. Facilitated their first community circle in their assigned dorm 3. Experienced the difference between structured facilitation and circle keeping 4. Logged all activities in the Mentoring Log (template from Week 25)

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist — Mentee Meetings

- Reviewed Mentoring Logs from last week
- Identified follow-up items for each mentee
- Set goal for each meeting based on mid-point review feedback
- If any mentee relationship needs adjustment based on mid-point review, prepared approach
- 4-4-4 breathing completed before each meeting

Pre-Session Preparation Checklist — Community Circle

- Community Circle Planning Template completed (from Session 82)
- Location identified — where will the circle happen? Is there enough space for chairs in a circle?
- Time communicated — does the dorm know when and where?
- Talking piece selected (meaningful object — book, stone, or anything the circle can respect)
- Opening question prepared (accessible, non-threatening)
- Topic question prepared (reflective but not too heavy for a first circle)
- Closing question prepared

- Mental rehearsal: What will you do if no one comes? If someone mocks the process? If the circle goes sideways?
 - Reminded yourself: The goal is not perfection. The goal is: people show up, people speak, people listen.
-

Community Circle Planning Template

Circle Keeper: _____

Date: ___ **Time:** _

Location: _____

Expected participants: _ (number)

Opening (3 minutes)

How will you welcome people?

Ground rules you'll establish: - Only the person holding the talking piece speaks - Speak from the heart - Listen from the heart - Say just enough - What's shared here stays here (with safety exceptions) - You can pass

Check-in round question:

Topic round question:

Closing round question:

After the circle — reflect:

How many people attended? _

How did the circle go overall?

What worked?

What was challenging?

Would you change anything for next time?

How did it feel to hold space for a group in your dorm — not as a facilitator teaching content, but as a circle keeper?

Bring this template to Tuesday supervision.

Meeting Guidance for Week 4

This week's focus: Adjusting based on mid-point review.

By now, you've met with each mentee three times. You should have a sense of who they are, what they need, and where the relationship is heading.

This week, apply your mid-point feedback to your meetings: - If your feedback was about asking more questions, set a mental target for open-ended questions during each meeting. - If your feedback was about boundaries, notice where boundary moments arise and hold them firmly. - If your feedback was about slowing down, pause intentionally during each meeting — let silence do its work.

Also: share the concept of the community circle with your mentees. Invite them. Having your mentees present at your first circle builds their investment in the community culture you're creating.

Field Work Reflection Prompts

Complete in your journal after all meetings and the community circle:

1. **How did the mid-point review change how you showed up for your mentee meetings today? Be specific.**
2. **Describe your first community circle. What happened? How did it feel? What surprised you?**
3. **How was circle keeping different from facilitating a session? What skills were the same? What was different?**
4. **You're now four weeks into Phase 3. Looking back at who you were on the first day of the program — Week 1, Session 1 — what has changed? Write at least half a page.**
5. **What's one question you have that you haven't asked yet in supervision? Write it down and commit to bringing it next Tuesday.**

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 28

What to Watch For

Self-assessment accuracy: Compare each participant's self-assessment to your own observations. Participants who rate themselves too high may lack self-awareness. Participants who rate themselves too low may be struggling with confidence or depression. Both deserve a conversation.

Response to feedback: How participants receive feedback tells you a lot about their readiness. Watch for: - **Defensive reactions** — "That's not fair" / "You don't see everything I do." These participants need the most growth in accountability. Be patient but don't back down. - **Immediate agreement with everything** — "You're right, you're right, you're right." This might be people-pleasing, not genuine reflection. Push: "Which of these surprises you? Which one do you disagree with?" - **Genuine engagement** — "I didn't realize I was doing that. Tell me more." This is what you're looking for.

Community circle anxiety: Running a circle in their own dorm — where they live, where their reputation exists, where people know them as inmates, not mentors — is different from facilitating in an assigned session room. Some participants will be anxious about looking "soft" or being mocked. Address this directly: "The men in your dorm have seen you go to class three times a week for six months. They've watched you change. Some of them are curious. Give them a chance."

Hours tracking: Some participants may be behind on their 60-hour requirement. By Week 28, they should have approximately 25-30 hours logged. If someone is significantly below that, create a plan to catch up — additional mentee meetings, extra community circles, or more facilitation opportunities.

Common Week 28 Challenges

"My feedback was worse than I expected." Handle with care. "The feedback isn't about who you are — it's about where you are. Nobody expects perfection at the midpoint. The question is whether you're growing. And the fact that you're sitting here, hearing this, and not walking away — that tells me you are."

"I don't know how to run a circle in my dorm." They do know how — they learned in Week 21, they've participated in circles since Week 1, and they've been in one every Tuesday for six months. What they're really saying is: "I'm scared." Respond to what's underneath: "You know how to do this. What you're feeling isn't

lack of knowledge — it's the weight of doing something meaningful in front of people who know you. That weight is real. Do it anyway."

"Nobody came to my circle." This happens. First circles are often small — 3-4 people is normal. Coach: "That's not failure. That's a start. Three men who were willing to sit in a circle in a prison dorm — that's remarkable. Next week, those three might bring one friend each. Culture change doesn't start with a crowd. It starts with a circle."

"My mentee is making real progress." Celebrate this. Many participants will be so focused on problems that they don't recognize wins. When someone reports genuine progress — a mentee who opened up, who used a skill, who made a different choice — acknowledge it in front of the group. "This is what you've been training for. This is what mentoring looks like when it works."

The Facilitator Feedback Form

Complete one for each participant BEFORE Session 82. Base it on: - Observation notes from Wednesday co-facilitation/observation sessions - Mentoring log reviews from Weeks 25-27 - Participation in Tuesday supervision sessions (case presentations, engagement, honesty) - Informal observations (interactions with cohort, behavior between sessions) - Senior mentor input (if applicable)

Form structure mirrors the self-assessment: - Mentee Relationships: 1-5 rating + specific observations - Facilitation Skills: 1-5 rating + specific observations - Self-Management: 1-5 rating + specific observations - Professional Practice: 1-5 rating + specific observations - Overall assessment: Greatest strength, most critical growth area, readiness level

Readiness levels (for facilitator's internal use — not shared with participant as a label): - **On track:** Meeting expectations for midpoint. Continue current trajectory. - **Needs support:** Struggling in 1-2 areas. Specific interventions needed. - **At risk:** Significant concerns. May need modified plan, additional mentoring, or honest conversation about readiness.

Preparation for Week 29

- Review community circle reports from Thursday — identify who succeeded, who struggled, and who needs coaching
- Prepare Session 85 topic: Facilitating groups vs. individual mentoring
- Begin planning for increased independence in Weeks 29-32 (fewer observations, more trust)
- Consider whether any participants need mentee reassignments based on first four weeks
- Update hours tracking — identify anyone who needs a catch-up plan

- Review goals set in Session 82 — prepare to reference them in ongoing supervision

Weeks 29–32



Increasing Independence

Week 29: Facilitating Groups vs. Individual Mentoring

Week 29 Overview

Purpose: Participants have been doing both group facilitation and one-on-one mentoring for weeks now. This week names what they've been feeling — that these are fundamentally different skills. By the end of this week, every participant should be able to articulate the difference, identify which approach a situation calls for, and adjust their style accordingly.

Sessions This Week: - Session 85 (Tuesday): Groups vs. Individual — Different Skills, Different Energy - Session 86 (Wednesday): Field work — independent facilitation with periodic observation - Session 87 (Thursday): Field work — mentoring meetings with mentees + community circles

Materials Needed: - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available) - Case presentation forms (1 per participant — see Session 85) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process

SESSION 85: Groups vs. Individual — Different Skills, Different Energy

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead or Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Identify at least 5 key differences between facilitating a group and mentoring one-on-one 2. Describe strategies for managing group energy — including dominant voices, quiet participants, and emotional contagion 3. Explain when to use group settings vs. individual meetings based on the situation 4. Present a case from their field experience and receive peer feedback

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

*"Check-in. You've been out in the field now for several weeks. The talking piece question today is: **What's one thing that's surprised you about doing this work for real — something you didn't expect?**"*

Send the talking piece. Listen for themes — particularly anything related to the difference between working with groups and working with individuals. You'll reference these later.

Review and Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Before we get into today's topic, let's hear from three people. Last week's field work — what happened? What went well? What's still sitting with you?"

Call on 3 participants. Brief updates — 2-3 minutes each. Don't solve problems yet. Just listen and acknowledge. If something connects to today's topic, flag it: "Hold that — we're going to dig into exactly that today."

Instruction: Two Different Jobs (25 minutes)

Purpose: Name the reality that group facilitation and individual mentoring require different skills, different energy, and different preparation.

Facilitator:

"Here's something nobody told you in Phase 2, because you had to feel it first: facilitating a group and sitting down one-on-one with a mentee are two completely different jobs. You've been doing both. Some of you are naturally better at one than the other. That's normal. But a FORGE mentor has to be able to do both — and has to know when each one is the right tool.

Let's break it down."

Write two columns on the board (or discuss verbally):

GROUP FACILITATION:

"When you're in front of a group, your job is to manage energy. Not just one person's energy — the energy of the whole room. You're reading 8, 10, 12 people at once. You're watching who's checked out, who's about to blow, who's dominating, who hasn't said a word. You're holding the space for the group to do its own work.

In a group, you're not the expert. You're the keeper. You set the conditions — then you get out of the way and let the group do what groups do: hold each other accountable, share experience, normalize struggle, and build community.

The biggest mistake new facilitators make with groups is talking too much. You're not teaching a class. You're facilitating a process. The less you talk, the more the group works."

Pause. Let them sit with that.

INDIVIDUAL MENTORING:

"One-on-one is a completely different animal. When you sit down with a mentee, the energy is all between two people. There's nowhere to hide — for either of you. It's intimate. It's personal. And the skills that matter most are listening, patience, and knowing when to push and when to just be present.

In a one-on-one, you can go deeper. You can ask questions that would be too personal for a group. You can sit with silence. You can follow where the mentee needs to go, not where your lesson plan says to go.

The biggest mistake new mentors make one-on-one is trying to fix everything. Your mentee doesn't need you to solve his problems. He needs you to help him see his own thinking clearly enough that he can solve them himself. That's MI. That's what you trained for."

Key differences to highlight:

"Let me name some specific differences:

Preparation. *For a group, you need a plan — an opening, a topic, activities, a closing. You can't walk in and wing it. For a one-on-one, you need to know your mentee's situation and have an idea of what to explore, but you have to be ready to throw your plan away if something more important comes up.*

Energy management. *In a group, emotional contagion is real. One person's energy affects everyone. If someone gets upset, the whole room shifts. You have to be able to hold that without getting swept up in it. One-on-one, you only have one person's energy to manage — plus your own.*

Confidentiality. *In a group, people share less because they know others are listening. That's appropriate. One-on-one is where the real disclosures happen. That's where someone tells you about the letter from his wife. That's where someone admits he's struggling. Respect that difference — don't try to force group-level vulnerability, and don't try to keep one-on-one conversations surface-level.*

Accountability. *Groups are powerful accountability tools. When a man makes a commitment in front of 10 other men, he's more likely to follow through. Use that. One-on-one accountability is different — it's relational. Your mentee follows through because he doesn't want to let you down. That's powerful too, but it's personal.*

Your role. *In a group, you're the facilitator. In a one-on-one, you're the mentor. A facilitator manages process. A mentor walks alongside a person. Don't confuse the two."*

Managing Group Energy (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let's go deeper on groups, because that's where most of you are still building confidence. Let's talk about the five most common group dynamics you'll face and how to handle each one."

1. The Dominator:

"There's always one person who talks too much. He fills every silence. He responds to every question. He means well — usually — but he's sucking the oxygen out of the room.

What do you do? Don't shut him down publicly — that kills trust. Instead: 'I appreciate your thoughts. Let's hear from someone who hasn't spoken yet.' Or: 'I'm going to ask everyone to limit themselves to one response on this next question.' Or, if it's persistent, talk to him privately: 'I can tell you're engaged, and that matters. What I need from you is to make space for the quieter guys. They need you to step back so they can step up.' That's a service over self conversation."

2. The Silent One:

"The opposite problem. Someone who never talks in group. Don't force them — that backfires every time. But don't ignore them either. Check in privately: 'I notice you're quiet in group. That's fine — but I want to make sure you're getting what you need. Is there something I can do to make it easier to participate?' Sometimes the answer is simple: he's an introvert. Sometimes it's deeper: he doesn't trust the group yet. Either way, respect it, but keep the door open."

3. Emotional Contagion:

"Someone shares something heavy — maybe he just got bad news. And suddenly the whole room shifts. People go quiet, or they start piling on with their own pain. The energy drops or spikes.

Your job is to hold the space without shutting down the emotion. Acknowledge it: 'That's real. Thank you for sharing that.' Then decide: does the group need to sit with this, or do we need to gently redirect? There's no formula — you have to read the room. If the group needs to process, let them. If one person needs more support than the group can give, say: 'I want to follow up with you after this session. For now, let's...' and bring the group back."

4. The Disruptor:

"Someone who's making side comments, joking at the wrong time, testing your authority. Don't escalate. Don't get into a power struggle in front of the group. Try the direct, low-key approach first: make eye contact, use his name, ask him a question that brings him back in. If it continues, pull him aside at break: 'Hey, what's going on? You seem like you're somewhere else today.' Often, disruption is a cover for something else — anxiety, anger, feeling out of place."

5. The Conflict Mid-Session:

"Two people start going at each other during your group. This is your final exam in real time. Step 1: Don't panic. Step 2: Name it. 'Hold on — I can see there's a real disagreement here. We're going to address it, but we're going to do it the way we do things in FORGE.' Step 3: Use the conflict resolution model. If it can't be resolved in the moment, separate them and follow up individually. Don't let the group session become a battle between two people."

When to Use Which Approach (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Some things belong in a group. Some things belong in a one-on-one. And some of you have already learned this the hard way. Let me give you a framework."

Use a group when: - The topic is universal — everyone can relate and benefit - You want peer accountability — people committing in front of each other - You're building community and connection - You want multiple perspectives on a problem - You're teaching a skill that benefits from practice and observation

Use one-on-one when: - The issue is personal or sensitive - Someone needs to be confronted and doing it publicly would shame them - A mentee is in crisis and needs focused attention - You need to go deep on someone's thinking or behavior patterns - Trust hasn't been established yet — build it privately first

Facilitator:

*"Here's the rule of thumb: **praise in public, challenge in private.** Celebrate growth in front of the group. Address problems one-on-one. Most of the time, that will serve you well."*

Case Presentations from the Field (35 minutes)

Purpose: This is the core of Phase 3 supervision — participants bringing real situations from their field work for peer consultation.

Facilitator:

"This is your time. I want four case presentations today. Each person gets about 8 minutes: 3 minutes to present your case, 5 minutes for the group to respond.

*Here's the format: 1. **What happened.** Describe the situation — group or one-on-one. 2. **What you did.** Walk us through your response. 3. **What you're unsure about.** Where do you need help?*

The group's job is not to judge. It's to help. Ask clarifying questions, offer alternatives, share if you've faced something similar. This is how we get better."

Facilitate 4 case presentations. Coach the group to ask good questions rather than jumping to advice. Watch for: - Is the presenter being honest about what went wrong, or performing? - Is the group offering genuine help or just validating? - Are there patterns across cases that you can name?

After all four presentations:

Facilitator:

"What themes did you notice across these cases? What keeps coming up?"

Let the group identify the patterns. Add your observations if they miss something important.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

*"Closing round. **What's one thing you're going to do differently this week based on what we discussed today — either in your group work or your one-on-one mentoring?**"*

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Wednesday you're facilitating independently. I'll be observing some of you — you won't always know when. That's intentional. I want to see you when you think no one's watching, because that's who you really are as a facilitator.

Thursday — mentoring meetings and community circles. If you're running a circle this week, come prepared. Plan your opening question. Plan your rounds. Don't wing it.

See you out there."

Session 85 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
 - Opening circle completed — "What's surprised you?" round
 - Field work review (3 participants)
 - Instruction delivered: group facilitation vs. individual mentoring
 - Five group dynamics discussed with strategies
 - "When to use which" framework shared
 - 4 case presentations completed with peer feedback
 - Patterns identified across cases
 - Closing circle completed with commitment to specific action
 - Wednesday/Thursday field work expectations set
-

SESSION 86: Field Work — Independent Facilitation

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants facilitate sessions independently in their assigned dorms or units. Program Lead or Senior Mentor conducts periodic observations — not every session, not every participant, and not always announced.

Observation Focus This Week: - How does the participant manage group energy? - Does the participant adjust approach based on the group's needs? - Is the participant talking too much or creating space for the group? - How does the participant handle unexpected moments?

Observation Notes: Document on the teaching demonstration rubric (Part IV). Provide feedback at the next Tuesday supervision session or in a brief one-on-one debrief.

Participant Expectations: - Arrive early to set up the space - Have a session plan — opening, content, activity, closing - Complete a brief self-reflection after the session (in journal): What went well? What would I change? What did I learn about facilitating groups today?

SESSION 87: Field Work — Mentoring and Community Circles

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants conduct one-on-one mentoring meetings with assigned mentees and/or facilitate community circles.

Mentoring Meeting Guidance: - Review where each mentee is — what was discussed last time, any commitments made, any updates - Use OARS throughout - Document the meeting in mentoring logs: date, topics discussed, mentee's current state, any concerns, follow-up needed - If a mentee missed the last meeting, explore why without interrogating

Community Circle Guidance: - Plan the circle: opening question, topic for discussion, closing question - Arrive early, set up chairs in circle, have the talking piece ready - Keep the circle to 45-60 minutes — circles that run too long lose their power - Document: who attended, what was discussed (themes, not specifics), energy level, anything that needs follow-up

Self-Reflection Prompt (journal): "Today I worked one-on-one with [mentee(s)] and/or ran a community circle. What I noticed about my own energy and approach in the one-on-one vs. the group setting was..."

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 29

What to Watch For

Group facilitation comfort levels. Some participants will be natural group facilitators — they read the room, manage energy, and create space. Others will struggle — they'll talk too much, lose control, or freeze when something unexpected happens. Use your observations this week to identify who needs coaching in which area.

One-on-one depth. Check mentoring logs. Are participants going deeper in their one-on-ones, or are meetings surface-level? If logs consistently say "checked in, everything's fine," push back: "What questions are you asking? Are you using reflections? When's the last time a mentee told you something he hadn't told anyone else? If it's been a while, you might be staying too comfortable."

Case presentation honesty. The case presentations in Session 85 are only useful if participants are honest about what they're struggling with. If everyone presents a success story, push: "I want to hear about a time it didn't work. Where you walked away and thought, 'I don't know what I'm doing.' That's where the learning is."

Burnout signals. Weeks 29-32 are when some participants start feeling the weight of the work. They're carrying 3-5 mentees, running circles, facilitating sessions. Watch for signs of fatigue, irritability, or withdrawal. Address it early — this is exactly what the parallel process principle is about.

Preparation for Week 30

- Gather examples of positive FORGE-staff interactions (if any exist)
- Prepare scenarios about working with COs — both supportive and skeptical
- Think about your own relationship with facility staff — what's worked, what hasn't. Be ready to be honest about the complexity
- Review any incidents or interactions participants have reported involving staff

Week 30: Working with Staff

Week 30 Overview

Purpose: FORGE mentors operate inside a system they don't control. Their effectiveness depends not only on their skills with peers but on their ability to navigate relationships with correctional officers and other staff. This week confronts that reality head-on — how to build credibility with staff, how to be helpful without overstepping, and what to do when staff are skeptical, hostile, or indifferent toward FORGE. By the end of this week, participants should be able to work within the institutional structure rather than against it, even when that structure is frustrating.

Sessions This Week: - Session 88 (Tuesday): Working with Staff — Building Bridges in an Imperfect System
- Session 89 (Wednesday): Field work — full facilitation, full mentoring caseload (3-5 mentees) - Session 90 (Thursday): Field work — mentoring meetings + community circles

Materials Needed: - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process

SESSION 88: Working with Staff — Building Bridges in an Imperfect System

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead or Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Describe the FORGE stance toward staff authority — respect the role, even when you disagree with the person 2. Identify at least 3 strategies for building credibility with COs and staff 3. Explain how to be helpful to staff without overstepping mentor boundaries 4. Respond appropriately when staff are skeptical or dismissive of FORGE 5. Navigate situations where staff behavior creates tension in the dorm

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

*"Check-in. Today we're talking about working with staff — COs, counselors, administrators. Before we get into it, I want to hear from you. Talking piece question: **What has your experience been like so far with staff in your role as a FORGE mentor? One honest sentence.**"*

Send the talking piece. Don't react to negative answers. Don't defend staff. Just listen. This is temperature-taking.

Review and Reflection (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"How did last week's field work go? Specifically — did anyone try something different in their group facilitation or one-on-one mentoring based on what we discussed? What happened?"

Hear from 3-4 participants. Brief updates. Connect what they share to the skills from Week 29 when possible.

Instruction: The Reality of Working Inside a System (30 minutes)

Purpose: Establish FORGE's position on staff relationships — clear-eyed, practical, and honest about the complexity.

Facilitator:

"Let me be straight with you about something. This might be the hardest topic in the entire program — not because the skills are difficult, but because the emotions are complicated.

You are doing transformative work inside a system that wasn't designed for transformation. You are building peace in a dorm while wearing the same uniform as everyone else. And the people who hold the keys, who control your movement, who can write you up or help you out — those are the staff. COs, counselors, unit managers, administrators.

Some of them will support FORGE. They'll see what you're doing and respect it. They'll give you space to work. They might even ask you for help with a situation.

Some of them won't care. FORGE is just another program to them. They're neutral — not hostile, not helpful. Just doing their shift.

And some of them will be skeptical. They'll think FORGE is soft. They'll think you're playing a game. They'll test you. They'll dismiss you. Some might actively make your work harder.

All three of those are real. And you have to be able to work with all three."

Pause.

Facilitator:

"Here's the FORGE position on staff, and I need you to hear this clearly:

We respect the role, even when we disagree with the person.

A CO's authority is not up for debate. That's the reality of the environment you're in. FORGE does not challenge staff authority. FORGE does not undermine staff. FORGE does not position mentors as alternatives to staff authority. If a CO gives a directive, you follow it — even if you think it's wrong. If staff behavior is genuinely unjust, there are grievance procedures for that. FORGE mentors don't become activists in the moment. That's not your role, and it will destroy your credibility and your program.

I know that's hard to hear. Some of you have stories about staff who've treated you unfairly. Those stories are real. I'm not dismissing them. But FORGE exists inside this institution with the cooperation of the administration. If we lose that cooperation, we lose the program. Every man you're mentoring, every circle you're running, every session you're facilitating — all of it depends on institutional support. That's not ideal. It's real."

Building Credibility with Staff (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Now let's talk about what actually works. How do you build a relationship with a CO or a counselor who doesn't know you, doesn't trust you, and assumes you're running a game?"

*It's the same way you build trust with anyone: **consistently, over time, through your actions.**"*

Strategy 1: Be Low-Maintenance

"The fastest way to build credibility with staff is to not be a problem. Show up where you're supposed to be. Don't create paperwork. Don't be the guy they have to deal with. When a CO sees that the FORGE mentors are the ones who aren't causing issues — that registers. It might take weeks. It might take months. But it registers."

Strategy 2: Be Useful Without Being Asked

"If there's tension building in the dorm and you see it before staff does — handle it. De-escalate the situation. When the CO comes by and everything is calm, he may not even know what you did. That's fine. You didn't do it for credit. You did it because that's what a stakeholder does.

Over time, some staff will start to notice that the dorm runs smoother when FORGE mentors are active. That's the most powerful endorsement you can get — and you can't ask for it. You can only earn it."

Strategy 3: Communicate Respectfully and Briefly

"When you do need to interact with staff, keep it short, clear, and respectful. 'Officer, I'm about to run a group session in the dayroom — just wanted you to know.' Not asking permission you don't need, not making a big deal of it, just keeping them informed. That's professional. That's how people who are taken seriously operate. If a CO asks what FORGE is, you've got the elevator speech. Deliver it calmly and confidently. Don't oversell it. Don't get defensive. Just tell them what it is."

Strategy 4: Never Put Staff on the Spot

"Don't ask a CO to do something for FORGE in front of other inmates. Don't put them in a position where saying yes looks like they're doing you a favor, or saying no makes them look bad. If you need something from staff, ask privately, respectfully, and with low stakes. Make it easy for them to say yes."

Strategy 5: When Staff Support You, Acknowledge It

"If a CO gives you space to run your circle, or a counselor refers someone to FORGE, or a unit manager says something positive about the program — acknowledge it. Not with flattery. Just genuine recognition: 'Appreciate you, Officer. That space helped us get some real work done.' People respond to being seen, including staff."

When Staff Are Skeptical (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let's talk about the hard part. What do you do when a CO thinks FORGE is a joke? Or thinks you're manipulating the system? Or says something dismissive in front of your mentees?"

First — don't take it personally. Their skepticism probably isn't about you. They've seen a hundred programs come and go. They've seen inmates claim to be reformed and then do the same thing the next week. Their skepticism is earned. Respect that.

Second — don't argue. You will never win an argument with a CO, and you shouldn't try. The moment you become adversarial with staff, you've lost. Not just the argument — your credibility, your mentees' trust in your composure, and potentially the program's standing.

Third — let your work speak. The most skeptical COs I've seen come around did so not because someone convinced them with words. They came around because they watched. They watched the dorm get calmer. They watched a conflict get handled without anyone getting hurt. They watched a man who used to be a problem become a solution. That's the argument FORGE makes — not with words, with results.

*Fourth — and this is important — **some staff will never come around.** Accept that. Not everyone has to support FORGE for FORGE to work. You don't need every CO to believe in what you're doing. You need to do your work regardless of whether they believe in it."*

Group Exercise: Real Scenarios (25 minutes)

Purpose: Work through actual staff-related situations from participants' field experience.

Facilitator:

"Now I want to hear from you. What situations have you actually faced involving staff? Not hypotheticals — real situations. Who's got one?"

Facilitate discussion of 3-4 real scenarios. For each one: 1. Participant describes the situation (2-3 minutes) 2. Ask: "What did you do?" (1 minute) 3. Ask the group: "What else could he have done?" (3-4 minutes) 4. Facilitator adds coaching if needed

Common scenarios that may come up (and key coaching points):

"A CO told me to stop holding my session."

Coaching: Comply immediately and without attitude. Follow up later — privately, respectfully — to understand why. If it's a misunderstanding about FORGE's authorization, connect the CO with the program lead or whoever granted the program space. Don't try to resolve institutional issues yourself.

"A CO made a comment about FORGE in front of my mentees — called it a 'feel-good group' or something dismissive."

Coaching: Don't react in the moment. Your mentees are watching how you handle it. If you stay composed and unbothered, that teaches them more about emotional regulation than any lesson you could deliver. Later, privately, you can address it with the CO if you have that kind of relationship. If not, let it go. Your program's results will speak louder than any comeback.

"My mentee got written up and I think the DR was unfair."

Coaching: Your opinion about whether a disciplinary report was fair is not the issue. Your job is to help your mentee process what happened, take accountability for whatever his part was, and move forward. Even if the DR was unjust, reacting to injustice with anger or acting out will only make things worse. Help him understand what he can control and what he can't.

"A CO asked me to 'handle' a situation in the dorm."

Coaching: This is actually a compliment — staff trust you enough to ask for help. But be careful. Don't become an unpaid CO. If the situation is within your scope — de-escalating a conflict, checking on someone who seems off, facilitating a conversation — do it. If it's enforcement — disciplining someone, searching, anything that involves staff authority — decline respectfully: "I can try to talk to him, but I can't do anything beyond that."

"I saw a CO do something I think was wrong — too aggressive, disrespectful, maybe worse."

Coaching: This is the hardest one. FORGE mentors are not in a position to confront staff about their behavior. But you're not powerless either. Document what you saw — date, time, what happened. If there's a grievance process, help the affected person access it. If it's a pattern, bring it to the program lead. Do not organize a group response. Do not confront the CO. Do not let your anger at an unjust system destroy the program that's your best tool for making things better.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"This was a heavy one. Working with staff is complicated because it asks you to be patient with a system that doesn't always deserve your patience. But here's what I want you to hold onto: every time you handle a staff situation with composure and professionalism, you're proving — to yourself, to your mentees, to the staff, and to the administration — that FORGE produces men who can be trusted. That trust is the currency that keeps this program alive.

*Closing round: **What's one thing you're going to keep in mind this week when you interact with staff?**"*

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Wednesday and Thursday — full caseload. Three to five mentees. Community circles. You're in it. If something comes up with staff this week, handle it the way we discussed. And write about it. I want to hear about it next Tuesday.

Lead and Serve. See you out there."

Session 88 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
- Opening circle completed — staff experience check-in
- Field work review from previous week
- Instruction delivered: FORGE's stance on staff authority
- Five credibility-building strategies discussed
- Skeptical staff — four-part response framework covered
- Real scenarios from the field discussed (minimum 3)
- Coaching provided on each scenario
- Closing circle completed with specific commitments
- Field work expectations set for Wednesday/Thursday

SESSION 89: Field Work — Full Facilitation and Mentoring

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants facilitate sessions independently with full mentoring caseload (3-5 mentees). Periodic observation by Program Lead or Senior Mentor.

Observation Focus This Week: - How do participants interact with staff in the field? Are they respectful and professional? - Do they navigate staff presence during sessions smoothly? - If a staff interaction interrupts their session, how do they handle the transition?

Participant Expectations: - Facilitate planned session in assigned area - If there are staff interactions during the session, handle them per today's discussion - Self-reflection in journal: "How did I interact with staff today? What went well? What could I improve?"

SESSION 90: Field Work — Mentoring Meetings and Community Circles

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants conduct one-on-one mentoring meetings with their full caseload and/or facilitate community circles.

Mentoring Meeting Guidance: - Full caseload contact this week — every mentee gets a meeting - Document all meetings in mentoring logs - If a mentee raises a staff-related concern, use this as a real-time opportunity to model the approach discussed in Session 88 - Continue using OARS in all mentoring conversations

Community Circle Guidance: - This week's suggested circle theme (optional — participants may choose their own): "How do we handle situations we can't control?" - Keep circles to 45-60 minutes - Document attendance, themes, energy level

Self-Reflection Prompt (journal): "This week I thought about my relationship with staff differently. One thing I realized about how I've been approaching staff interactions is..."

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 30

What to Watch For

Staff relationship patterns. Pay attention to how each participant talks about staff during supervision. Some will default to resentment. Some will be too deferential. You're looking for participants who can be honest about the complexity — who can say "That CO was wrong, and I handled it by..." without either excusing the behavior or losing their composure.

Overcorrection. After this session, some participants may overcorrect — becoming too passive around staff, avoiding all interaction, or suppressing legitimate concerns. That's not the goal. The goal is confident, professional engagement. If you see someone becoming a doormat, address it: "Respecting authority doesn't mean disappearing. You can be respectful and still have a presence."

Undercorrection. Others may nod along in the session and then continue exactly as before — confrontational, dismissive, or avoidant with staff. Watch for this in field observations and address it directly.

Institutional dynamics. Be aware of any current tensions between inmates and staff at the facility level. If there's an ongoing issue — a lockdown, a policy change, a specific incident — acknowledge it. Pretending the institutional context doesn't exist will cost you credibility.

Common Challenges This Week

"**Why do we have to be the bigger person?**" This question will come up, maybe not in those words. The honest answer: "Because you're the one who's changed. Being the bigger person isn't weakness — it's the whole point of everything you've learned. And practically speaking, you have less power in this system than staff do. Using the power you do have — composure, credibility, skill — is how you create change from where you are."

"**FORGE should have more institutional support.**" Possibly true. But this session isn't about what FORGE should have — it's about working with what exists right now. If participants want to advocate for more institutional support, channel that energy productively: keep collecting data, keep producing results, keep building credibility.

Preparation for Week 31

- Prepare to discuss setbacks and failure with honesty and compassion
- Think about examples of mentees who struggled, relapsed, dropped out — and what happened afterward
- Review any current situations where a participant's mentee is struggling
- This is an emotionally heavy session. Be ready to hold space without rushing to reassurance

Week 31: When Someone Fails

Week 31 Overview

Purpose: This is the session many participants have been needing without knowing it. By Week 31, nearly every participant has experienced a mentee who's struggled — missed sessions, caught a disciplinary report, dropped out, relapsed into old patterns, or simply stopped trying. This week confronts the emotional reality of mentoring people through imperfect change. The goal is not to eliminate disappointment, but to process it honestly and build the resilience to keep going. By the end of this week, participants should understand that setbacks are part of the change process — not evidence that the work doesn't matter.

Sessions This Week: - Session 91 (Tuesday): When Someone Fails — Holding Hope Without Breaking - Session 92 (Wednesday): Field work — independent facilitation with periodic observation - Session 93 (Thursday): Field work — mentoring meetings + community circles

Materials Needed: - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available)

SESSION 91: When Someone Fails — Holding Hope Without Breaking

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead or Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Identify the emotional impact of a mentee's setback on the mentor 2. Distinguish between taking responsibility for someone's growth and taking ownership of their choices 3. Describe at least 3 strategies for processing disappointment without disengaging 4. Explain the long view of change — why setbacks don't erase progress 5. Articulate when to hold on to a mentee and when to let go

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Today's topic is one we've needed to have for a while. Some of you have been carrying this quietly. Some of you have mentioned it in case presentations. Some of you haven't said anything but I can see it.

*The talking piece question today is a big one. Take your time with it: **Has one of your mentees disappointed you? What happened, and how did it affect you?***

If you haven't experienced this yet, you can share a time when someone you believed in let you down. But be honest — this isn't a session for performing. This is a session for being real."

Send the talking piece. This round may take longer than usual. Let it. This is the most important part of the session — naming the pain.

Facilitator listens for: - Who is carrying guilt ("I should have done more") - Who is carrying anger ("He threw it all away") - Who is carrying doubt ("Maybe this doesn't work") - Who is numb ("It is what it is")

All of these are valid. Don't correct any of them yet. Just let them land.

Instruction: The Hardest Part of This Work (30 minutes)

Purpose: Normalize the emotional cost of mentoring and provide a framework for sustaining hope without denial.

Facilitator:

*"I want to tell you something that nobody tells mentors until it's too late: **the hardest part of this work is not the skills. It's the heartbreak.***

You will invest in a man. You will sit with him when nobody else would. You will listen to him talk about his kids, his regrets, his plans to change. You will watch him start to grow — show up on time, participate in circles, catch his thinking errors, make better choices. And then one day, he'll get a disciplinary report. Or he'll stop coming. Or he'll get into a fight. Or he'll tell you he's done.

And part of you will break. Not dramatically. Not where anyone can see. Just a quiet crack somewhere inside where you thought you were making a difference.

That crack is the price of caring. And every mentor who's ever done this work — in prison, on the street, in schools, in churches — every single one of them knows exactly what I'm talking about."

Pause. Let the room sit with it.

Facilitator:

*"Now I'm going to tell you something harder: **it is not your fault.***

You did not fail. Your mentee made choices. Those choices are his to own — not yours. The parallel process you learned back in Phase 1? It works in both directions. Just like you had to do your own work before you could help others, your mentee has to do his own work too. You can hold the door open. You can show him what's on the other side. But you cannot walk through it for him."

The Stages of Mentor Disappointment (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me name something you've probably been feeling without having words for it. When a mentee has a setback, most mentors go through a predictable process. Not everyone hits every stage, but see if you recognize yourself in this."

Stage 1: Self-Blame

"The first thing most mentors feel is guilt. 'What did I miss? Was I not checking in enough? Did I push too hard? Did I not push hard enough?' You replay every conversation looking for the moment you could have changed the outcome.

Here's the truth: maybe you could have done something differently. But that doesn't mean the outcome would have changed. People change on their own timeline. You influence the process. You don't control it."

Stage 2: Anger

"After guilt comes anger. Not always — but often. 'I put in all that work and he threw it away.' 'He knew better.' 'He disrespected the program, he disrespected me, he disrespected everyone who believed in him.'

That anger is real, and it's yours to process. But be careful with it. If you carry anger toward a mentee, it will poison every interaction you have with him going forward — and it will leak into your work with your other mentees. Anger tells you something important — that you cared. But it's not a place to live."

Stage 3: Doubt

"This is the dangerous one. After guilt and anger comes the question: 'Does any of this matter? If someone can go through all of this and still mess up — what's the point?'

If you've felt this, you're not weak. You're human. But I need you to stay with me here, because this is where mentors quit. Not because the work is too hard — because the doubt gets too heavy.

*Here's what I want you to hold: **one setback does not erase growth.** A man who catches a DR after six months of progress has not gone back to zero. He's a man who grew for six months and then stumbled. The growth is still there. It doesn't evaporate. He may not be able to see it right now. That's why he needs you."*

Stage 4: Numbness

"Some mentors protect themselves by stopping caring. 'It is what it is.' 'You can't help everyone.' 'I'm not going to invest like that again.'

I understand that instinct. It's a survival mechanism. But a numb mentor is a useless mentor. If you've stopped caring, you've stopped being able to do this work. And the men you're serving will feel it immediately. They know the difference between a mentor who's present and a mentor who's going through the motions."

Stage 5: Resilience

"And then — if you do the work of processing stages 1 through 4 honestly — you get to resilience. Resilience doesn't mean the disappointment doesn't hurt. It means you can hold the hurt and still show up. It means you can care about someone without needing them to succeed in order for your effort to matter. It means you take the long view."

The Long View of Change (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let me give you the long view, because you need it.

*The research on behavior change says something that sounds discouraging but is actually liberating: **most people who ultimately change their lives permanently fail multiple times first.** Relapse is part of recovery. Setbacks are part of growth. The stages of change model you learned in Phase 2 — precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance — people don't move through those in a straight line. They cycle. They go forward and back and forward again.*

Think about your own journey. How many times did you try to change something about yourself before it stuck? How many times did you know what the right thing to do was and do the wrong thing anyway? Be honest.

Your mentee is doing the same thing. The difference is, this time he has a mentor. This time, when he stumbles, there's someone there who doesn't give up on him. That might be the difference that makes this time the time it sticks.

Or it might not. And that has to be okay too."

Pause.

Facilitator:

*"Here's the sentence I want you to carry with you: **I am responsible for my effort. I am not responsible for his outcome.***

Say it to yourself. Write it down. Tape it inside your journal. Because the moment you make his outcome your responsibility, you will either burn out or shut down. Neither one serves anyone."

Specific Situations and Responses (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Let's get practical. What do you actually do when these things happen?"

When a mentee gets a disciplinary report:

"First — don't react immediately. Let a day pass if you can. Then go see him. Don't lead with disappointment. Don't lead with 'What were you thinking?' Lead with presence: 'I heard what happened. I'm here. What's going on?'

Then help him do what FORGE taught him to do: a thinking report. Walk through the situation-thought-feeling-action-consequence chain. Help him see his own thinking clearly. Don't moralize. Don't lecture. Just help him do the work.

If the DR means he's removed from FORGE, be honest about that. But make clear: 'This doesn't mean I've given up on you. When you're eligible to come back, I'll be here.' And mean it."

When a mentee drops out:

"This one hurts differently because it feels like rejection. He didn't just stumble — he chose to leave. Try to have a conversation before he's gone: 'I respect your decision. I just want to understand why.' Listen to his reasons without arguing. Sometimes the reason is valid — the program isn't right for him right now.

Sometimes the reason is fear disguised as something else.

Either way, leave the door open: 'If you ever want to come back, or if you just need someone to talk to, I'm here.' Then let him go. You cannot hold someone who doesn't want to be held."

When a mentee makes the same mistake again:

"This tests your patience more than anything else. You've had the conversation. You've done the thinking report. He understood it. And then he did the exact same thing.

Remember: understanding something intellectually and having it change your behavior are two different things. How many times did you understand your anger was destructive before you actually learned to manage it? Change isn't a switch. It's a process. Your job is to keep the process going — even when it feels like you're going in circles."

When you're losing hope:

"Talk to someone. That's what this supervision group is for. That's what your cohort is for. That's what senior mentors are for. Do not carry this alone. The parallel process means you need the same kind of support you're giving your mentees. If you're struggling, say so. That's not weakness. That's wisdom."

Group Processing (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"I want to open the floor. This isn't case presentations. This is processing. If you're carrying something related to what we discussed today — a mentee who's struggling, a disappointment you haven't talked about, a doubt you've been sitting with — this is the space for it.

No one has to share. But the invitation is real."

Hold space. Let people share. Don't rush to fix or reassure. Sometimes the most powerful thing a facilitator can do is sit in the discomfort with the group and not try to make it better with words.

If the room is heavy and quiet, that's okay. Silence after hard truths is appropriate.

If someone shares something particularly raw, acknowledge it: "Thank you. That took something to say. The fact that it hurts means you're doing this right."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"I want to close with this. The men who are hardest to mentor are the men who need mentoring the most. The ones who test you, disappoint you, push you away, fail publicly — those are the ones the system has given up on over and over again. Every time someone gave up on them, it confirmed what they already believed about themselves: that they're not worth the effort.

You have the power to break that cycle. Not by fixing them. Not by saving them. By being the person who doesn't leave. That's it. That's the whole job some days. Just don't leave.

*Closing round: **One word** — **what are you feeling right now?**"*

Send the talking piece. One word each. No explanation needed.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Whatever you're feeling is right. Take care of yourselves this week. Write in your journals tonight — even if it's just a few sentences about what came up today. Use your coping strategies. Talk to each other. That's what the brotherhood is for.

Wednesday and Thursday — field work continues. If you've got a mentee who's struggling, don't avoid him this week. Go find him. Show up.

See you out there."

Session 91 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
 - Extended opening circle completed — mentee disappointment stories shared
 - Instruction delivered: emotional cost of mentoring
 - Five stages of mentor disappointment discussed
 - "Long view of change" framework presented
 - Specific situations addressed: DR, dropout, repeated mistakes, losing hope
 - "Responsible for effort, not outcome" principle established
 - Group processing held — open space for sharing
 - Closing circle completed — one-word check-out
 - Self-care and journaling emphasized
-

SESSION 92: Field Work — Independent Facilitation

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants facilitate sessions independently. Periodic observation continues.

Observation Focus This Week: - How is the participant's energy after an emotionally heavy supervision session? Is he present or depleted? - If a participant is working with a mentee who has recently struggled, how does he approach the interaction? - Is there evidence of burnout or emotional withdrawal?

Participant Expectations: - Facilitate planned session in assigned area - If you're working with a mentee who has had a setback, make contact this week — don't avoid the conversation - Self-reflection in journal: "After Tuesday's session, I'm thinking about... The mentee I'm most worried about right now is... because..."

SESSION 93: Field Work — Mentoring Meetings and Community Circles

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants conduct one-on-one mentoring meetings and/or facilitate community circles.

Mentoring Meeting Guidance: - Prioritize mentees who are struggling — they need contact this week - Use OARS and the long view approach discussed in Session 91 - If a mentee has had a recent setback, walk through a thinking report together - Document all meetings in mentoring logs — note mentee's emotional state and your own

Community Circle Guidance: - This week's suggested circle theme (optional): "What keeps you going when things get hard?" or "Tell about a time you failed and what you learned from it" - Keep circles to 45-60 minutes - Document attendance, themes, energy level

Self-Reflection Prompt (journal): "The mentee relationship that's hardest for me right now is... What makes it hard is... What I'm going to keep doing anyway is..."

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 31

What to Watch For

Emotional fallout from Session 91. This is one of the heaviest sessions in the entire program. Some participants will be energized by it — relieved to finally name what they've been carrying. Others will be depleted. Check in informally with anyone who seemed particularly affected during the session.

The "I don't care" response. Watch for participants who respond to this session by hardening — deciding they won't invest emotionally in mentees anymore. That's a protective response, not a genuine one. It needs to be addressed, but gently: "I hear you saying you're not going to get attached. I understand why. But the whole reason FORGE works is because you do get attached. That's not a flaw — it's the feature. The question isn't whether to care. It's how to care sustainably."

Mentee avoidance. After a setback, the natural instinct — for both the mentor and the mentee — is to avoid each other. Check mentoring logs. If a participant hasn't made contact with a struggling mentee this week, ask about it directly.

Peer support activation. Watch whether the cohort rallies around members who are struggling. This is the normative culture at work. If participants are checking on each other after this session, the program is working at the deepest level.

Your own processing. This session may activate your own experiences of disappointment and loss. If you're carrying your own version of what participants shared, take care of yourself. Model what you're asking of them.

Common Challenges This Week

"How many chances does someone get?" This is a legitimate question. The honest answer: "There's no formula. Some people need three chances. Some need ten. The question isn't how many chances to give — it's whether the person is still trying. As long as someone is genuinely working at it, even imperfectly, they deserve another chance. When someone has completely checked out and is using FORGE as a shield without doing the work — that's a different conversation."

"What if I'm the one who's failing?" Some participants will turn this session inward and start questioning their own adequacy as mentors. Normalize this: "If you're asking that question, you're probably doing better than you think. The mentors who should worry are the ones who never question themselves."

Preparation for Week 32

- Ask all participants to come to Session 94 with a real situation from their field work that they need help with — the harder, the better
- Review the simulation scenario bank (Part III) as a reference for the types of situations that might come up
- Prepare to facilitate a session that is entirely participant-driven — you are the guide, not the instructor
- This is the most advanced problem-solving session in the program. Trust the group. They're ready.

Week 32: Advanced Conflict Scenarios

Week 32 Overview

Purpose: This is the most advanced problem-solving session in the FORGE curriculum. There are no more practice scenarios. There are no more hypotheticals. Participants bring real situations from the field — the ones that kept them up at night, the ones they're still not sure they handled right, the ones they're facing right now and don't know what to do about. The group works through each situation together using every skill they've developed across 32 weeks. This week also marks the beginning of the next stage of servant leadership: participants begin helping to train the next cohort's Phase 1 participants.

Sessions This Week: - Session 94 (Tuesday): Advanced Conflict Scenarios — The Real Thing - Session 95 (Wednesday): Field work — independent facilitation, begin training next cohort's Phase 1 participants - Session 96 (Thursday): Field work — mentoring meetings + community circles

Materials Needed: - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available) - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process

Pre-Session Assignment (given at end of Week 31): Every participant must come to Session 94 with at least one real situation from their field work that they want the group's help with. The harder, the better. No practice scenarios. No cleaned-up versions. The real thing.

SESSION 94: Advanced Conflict Scenarios — The Real Thing

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead or Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Present a real, unresolved challenge from their field work clearly and honestly 2. Analyze a complex situation using multiple FORGE frameworks (conflict resolution, MI, thinking reports, trauma awareness, boundary assessment) 3. Offer specific, actionable feedback to a peer based on their own field experience 4. Recognize when a situation requires referral, escalation, or acceptance rather than intervention 5. Demonstrate the capacity to work through ambiguity — situations with no clean answer

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Today is different. No lesson. No instruction. No framework to teach you. Today is entirely about your real work in the field. You've spent 32 weeks building skills. Today you use all of them — not on a simulation, but on the actual situations you're facing.

Check-in: On a scale of 1 to 10, how confident do you feel right now in your ability to handle whatever your field work throws at you? And what's one thing that would move that number up by one?"

Send the talking piece. Pay attention to the numbers. Pay attention to what they say would move the number up. Both will tell you where each person is.

Setting the Frame (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Here's how today works. Each person who has a situation brings it to the group. You present it — the full situation, what you've tried, where you're stuck. Then the group works it. Not by telling you what to do — by asking questions, by offering perspectives you might not have considered, by pushing your thinking.

Ground rules for today:

1. **Honesty.** *Don't clean up the story. If you handled it badly, say so. That's where the learning is.*
2. **Respect.** *When someone presents, they're being vulnerable. Don't make them regret it.*
3. **Specificity.** *'You should try harder' is not helpful. 'What if you tried a reflection like...' — that's helpful.*
4. **Humility.** *When you're offering feedback, remember that you don't have the full picture. You weren't there. Ask before you assume.*
5. **No competition.** *This isn't about who has the hardest situation or the best answer. It's about collective problem-solving.*

I'm going to step back more than usual today. I'll jump in if something needs correcting or if I see something the group is missing. But this is your session. You've been trained for this. Show me."

Case Work: Real Situations from the Field (85 minutes)

Purpose: This is the heart of the session. Participants present real challenges and the group works through them together.

Format for each case (approximately 15-20 minutes per case, aim for 4-5 cases):

Step 1 — Presentation (3-4 minutes) The presenting participant describes the situation: - What's happening? - Who's involved? - What have you tried? - What's the result so far? - Where are you stuck?

Step 2 — Clarifying questions (3-4 minutes) The group asks questions to understand the full picture. Questions only — no advice yet. - "When you say he got aggressive, what did that look like specifically?" - "How long has this been going on?" - "What's his relationship with the other people involved?" - "Have you talked to him about it directly?" - "What's your gut telling you?"

Step 3 — Group analysis and feedback (5-8 minutes) The group offers perspectives, alternatives, and recommendations. - "Have you tried using a reflection instead of a question there?" - "It sounds like this might be a trauma response — have you considered..." - "I had a similar situation with one of my mentees. What worked for me was..." - "I wonder if this is actually about something different than what's on the surface." - "This might be one where you need to refer rather than handle yourself."

Step 4 — Facilitator coaching (2-3 minutes) Facilitator adds observations the group missed, corrects anything that was off, reinforces what was strong.

Step 5 — Presenter's takeaway (1 minute) The presenter states what he's going to do next based on the discussion.

Facilitator guidance during the case work:

Let the group lead. Your job today is to observe, not instruct. The group should be doing 80% of the analysis and feedback. If they're doing it well, stay quiet. If they're missing something critical, step in — but frame it as a question: "What about...?" or "Has anyone considered...?"

Watch for skills integration. This is the session where you see whether 32 weeks of training has taken root. Listen for: - Conflict resolution language — are they using Pause & Posture, Name the Heat, Facts > Stories? - MI skills — are they recommending open questions, reflections, rolling with resistance? - Trauma awareness — can they recognize when a behavior might be a trauma response? - Boundary awareness — can they identify when a situation is beyond mentor scope? - Emotional regulation — are they staying calm while discussing intense situations? - Problem-solving framework — are they generating options rather than jumping to one answer?

If you hear these skills being used naturally — not performed, but genuinely applied — the program is working.

Watch for what's missing. Equally important: notice what the group doesn't bring up. If someone presents a situation with clear safety concerns and nobody mentions referral, that's a coaching moment. If someone describes a mentee's behavior that sounds like a mental health issue and nobody names it, step in.

Name the hard cases. Some situations don't have good answers. Part of advanced practice is learning to sit with ambiguity. If a situation truly has no clean resolution, say so: "This is one of those situations where there's no perfect move. What you're doing is managing an imperfect situation as well as it can be managed. That's the work."

Types of cases that may come up:

A mentee who's being pressured by people outside the program:

Key questions: Is it a safety issue? Does the mentee want help? What's within the mentor's scope? When does this need to go to staff or program lead?

A conflict between two mentees that the mentor is caught in the middle of:

Key questions: Has the mentor avoided triangulation? Has he brought the two parties together? Is he maintaining neutrality or has he picked a side?

A mentee who's manipulating the mentor or the program:

Key questions: What's the evidence? Is the group being honest about what they're seeing, or are they giving the mentee the benefit of the doubt because it's easier? What does accountability look like here?

A situation involving staff that the mentor isn't sure how to navigate:

Key questions: Apply Week 30's framework. Is the mentor staying within FORGE's position on staff authority? What options does he actually have?

A situation where the mentor's own buttons are being pushed:

Key questions: What's getting triggered? Is the mentor aware of his own reaction? What does he need to do for himself before he can help his mentee?

A mentee who is doing well but the mentor isn't sure if the change is genuine:

Key questions: What would genuine change look like? How do you tell the difference between transformation and performance? Can you ever be sure? Does it matter?

Debrief and Synthesis (10 minutes)

After all cases have been presented:

Facilitator:

"Let's step back from the specific cases and look at the bigger picture. What themes did you notice today? What came up more than once?"

Let the group identify patterns. Common themes that may emerge: - The line between helping and controlling - Not knowing the right answer and having to act anyway - The tension between trusting someone and holding them accountable - How the mentor's own history affects how he responds - When to escalate and when to sit with discomfort

Facilitator:

"Here's what I saw today. I saw a group of men who can analyze a complex human situation, consider multiple angles, draw on real skills, and offer each other genuine help. That's not a small thing. Thirty-two weeks ago, most of you had never heard of a thinking report. Today you're coaching each other through situations that would challenge a trained social worker.

That doesn't mean you have all the answers. You don't. Nobody does. But you have the tools to work through hard situations thoughtfully instead of reacting. And you have each other. That's the FORGE model working exactly as it was designed to work."

Introduction: Training the Next Cohort (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"One more thing before we close. Starting this week, some of you will begin helping to train the next cohort's Phase 1 participants. This is the servant leadership pipeline — the same model that makes PEP and GRIP sustainable. You learned from mentors who came before you. Now you pass it on.

Here's what this looks like in practice: you'll co-facilitate Phase 1 sessions with the program lead or a senior mentor. You won't lead solo — not yet. Your role is to support, to share your experience when it's relevant, and to model what a FORGE mentor looks like. The new participants will learn as much from watching you as from anything in the lesson plan.

This week during your field work, you may be asked to sit in on a Phase 1 session. If you are, your job is simple: be present, be honest, and remember what it felt like to be in Week 1. You were skeptical. You were uncomfortable. You didn't trust the process yet. The men in front of you are exactly where you were. Treat them accordingly.

We'll talk more about this in coming weeks. For now, just be ready."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Closing round. You've been doing this work for real — in the field, with real people, with real consequences. Today you proved you can work through the hardest situations together. That matters.

*Talking piece question: **What's one thing you know now about this work that you couldn't have learned in a classroom?"***

Send the talking piece.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Wednesday and Thursday — field work continues. Some of you may begin co-facilitating with the new cohort. If you do, take it seriously. Those men are watching everything you do.

For everyone — keep your mentoring logs current, keep your circles running, keep showing up for your mentees. We're in the final stretch. Four weeks to certification. Everything you do from here forward is part of your portfolio.

Lead and Serve. See you out there."

Session 94 Checklist

- Room set up in circle
 - Opening circle completed — confidence scale check-in
 - Ground rules for case work established
 - Minimum 4 real cases presented and worked through by the group
 - Facilitator coaching provided where needed
 - Skills integration observed and noted (for assessment purposes)
 - Group debrief completed — themes and patterns identified
 - Next cohort training introduced
 - Closing circle completed
 - Field work expectations set, including possible Phase 1 co-facilitation
-

SESSION 95: Field Work — Independent Facilitation + Next Cohort Training

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants facilitate sessions independently. Some participants may begin co-facilitating Phase 1 sessions with the incoming cohort.

For participants doing standard field work: - Continue independent facilitation in assigned areas - Apply any insights from Tuesday's case work to current situations - Periodic observation continues

For participants co-facilitating with the new cohort: - Arrive early. Meet with the Program Lead or Senior Mentor to review the session plan - Your role is support — follow the lead facilitator's direction - Share your personal experience only when invited or when it's clearly relevant - After the session, debrief with the lead facilitator: What did you notice? What did you learn about teaching by doing it?

Observation Focus This Week: - Are participants applying the group's feedback from Session 94 in their field work? - For those co-facilitating with the new cohort: how do they interact with Phase 1 participants? Are they patient? Are they authentic? Do they remember what it felt like to be new?

Participant Expectations: - Self-reflection in journal: "Today I [facilitated/co-facilitated/mentored]. The situation I brought to the group on Tuesday — here's what I tried differently based on their feedback..."

SESSION 96: Field Work — Mentoring Meetings and Community Circles

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours (in assigned area)

Field Work Plan

Participants conduct one-on-one mentoring meetings with their full caseload and/or facilitate community circles.

Mentoring Meeting Guidance: - Full caseload contact — every mentee gets a meeting - Document all meetings in mentoring logs - Continue applying MI, conflict resolution, and trauma-aware approaches - Begin noting mentee progress for portfolio documentation — you'll need mentee progress notes for your certification review

Community Circle Guidance: - This week's suggested circle theme (optional): "What does it mean to lead by example?" or "Who taught you something important, and how did they teach it?" - If you have new cohort participants in your area, consider inviting them to observe a circle (with the group's permission) - Keep circles to 45-60 minutes - Document attendance, themes, energy level

Self-Reflection Prompt (journal): "I'm 4 weeks from certification. The mentor I am today compared to the man who walked into Week 1 is different in these ways... The areas I still need to grow are..."

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 32

What to Watch For

Readiness for certification. You're now four weeks out. As you observe this week's case work and field performance, start making mental notes about each participant's readiness. Who is clearly ready? Who needs more development in specific areas? Who might need a "conditional" recommendation? Don't share these assessments yet — but start forming them.

Skills integration in case work. Session 94 is your best diagnostic tool. When participants present cases and the group responds, you can see exactly what skills have been internalized and what's still surface-level. Take notes on each participant's contributions — both as presenters and as consultants. This feeds directly into your assessment of their readiness.

Quality of peer consultation. By Week 32, the group should be able to function as a high-quality peer consultation team. If the feedback is still generic ("You should try harder" or "Just talk to him"), the group hasn't reached the level of specificity needed. Push for concrete, actionable suggestions grounded in specific FORGE frameworks.

Next cohort transition. Watch how participants respond to the idea of training the next cohort. Some will be excited — this is the servant leadership moment they've been waiting for. Others may be anxious about teaching when they still feel like learners. Normalize both: "You don't have to have all the answers to help someone who's just starting. You just have to be honest about your experience."

Common Challenges This Week

"I don't have a case to present." Push back: "You've been in the field for weeks with 3-5 mentees. If you don't have a single situation you're unsure about, either you're not looking closely enough or you're not being honest. Dig deeper."

Cases that reveal serious gaps. If a case presentation reveals that a participant is handling something dangerously wrong — missing safety concerns, violating boundaries, ignoring red-line situations — address it directly. Not punitively, but clearly: "I need to flag something. This situation has [specific concern]. Let's talk about what needs to happen."

The "I already know this" participant. Some participants may approach this session with overconfidence — treating the case work as a chance to show off rather than genuinely engage. The best counter is a hard question they don't have an answer for. Overconfidence is as dangerous as under-confidence in a mentor.

Preparation for Week 33

- Begin preparing for the certification assessment process — review the Phase 3 assessment criteria (Part IV)
- Week 33's topic is sustainability and burnout prevention. Start gathering observations about which participants are showing signs of fatigue
- Review each participant's mentoring hours log — are they on track for the 60-hour requirement?
- Begin scheduling final simulation assessments and portfolio reviews for Week 36
- Prepare to discuss the 6-month post-certification service commitment — what it looks like, what's expected, what support is available

Weeks 33–36

Independent Practice & Certification

Week 33: Sustainability and Self-Care

Week 33 Overview

Purpose: Equip emerging mentors with the tools and mindset to sustain themselves over the long haul. Mentoring is not a sprint — it is a way of life. Without deliberate self-care, even the strongest mentors burn out, lose their edge, or begin to harm the people they're trying to help. This week addresses the reality that serving others costs something, and that cost must be managed — not ignored.

Sessions This Week: - Session 97 (Tuesday): Sustainability and Self-Care — Supervision Session - Session 98 (Wednesday): Field work — Independent sessions - Session 99 (Thursday): Field work — Mentoring + community circles + training next cohort

Materials Needed: - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process - Burnout Self-Assessment handout (1 per participant — see below) - Personal Sustainability Plan worksheet (1 per participant — see below) - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available)

SESSION 97: Sustainability and Self-Care

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Recognize the signs of burnout and compassion fatigue in themselves 2. Distinguish between self-care as a practice and self-care as an event 3. Identify their personal warning signs — the signals that they're running on empty 4. Build a concrete, realistic self-care plan that works within a correctional environment 5. Articulate why sustainability is a service to the people they mentor

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Check-in round. We're going deep today, so I need honesty from the start. Here's the question:

On a scale of 1 to 10 — 1 being completely depleted, 10 being fully charged — where is your tank right now? And what's draining it?

One number and one sentence. That's it."

Send the talking piece around. Facilitator goes first to model honesty. Pay close attention to answers — anyone below a 4 needs individual follow-up after the session.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Look around this circle. Some of you are running low. That's not failure — that's the reality of doing this work. Today we're going to talk about what to do about it before it takes you out."

The Cost of Caring (20 minutes)

Purpose: Name the reality that mentoring exacts a toll — and that ignoring the toll doesn't make it go away.

Facilitator:

"Let me say something that nobody told me when I started this work, and I wish they had:

Serving other people will exhaust you if you let it.

Not because the work isn't worth doing. It is. You know it is — you've seen lives change because of what you do. But here's the part that doesn't get talked about enough: every time you sit with a man who is hurting, you absorb some of that hurt. Every time you de-escalate a situation that could have gone sideways, your body pays for the adrenaline whether you realize it or not. Every time a mentee who was doing well falls back into old patterns, something inside you takes a hit.

*That's called **compassion fatigue**. And if you don't acknowledge it, it will turn into burnout. And burnout doesn't just hurt you — it hurts every single person who depends on you."*

Pause. Let it sit.

"Burnout doesn't show up overnight. It creeps in. Let me describe what it looks like, and I want you to be honest with yourself about whether any of this sounds familiar."

Signs of Burnout — Read slowly, one at a time:

"You start going through the motions. The sessions you facilitate feel flat. You're doing the steps, but the heart isn't in it.

You get irritable with people who used to inspire patience in you. A mentee asks a question you've answered before and you feel annoyed instead of compassionate.

You start avoiding. Maybe you find reasons to miss supervision. Maybe you pull back from your mentees without realizing it. Maybe you stop journaling because you don't want to look at what's inside.

You feel cynical. 'These guys aren't going to change.' 'What's the point?' 'Nobody appreciates what I do.' Those thoughts start showing up more often.

You lose your identity outside the mentor role. You don't know who you are when you're not helping someone.

You stop taking care of yourself. Sleep suffers. You withdraw from the people who refuel you. You stop doing the things that used to bring you peace."

Pause.

"I didn't read that list to scare you. I read it because every experienced mentor — every single one — has been somewhere on that list. The question isn't whether it will happen. The question is whether you'll recognize it when it does."

Burnout Self-Assessment (15 minutes)

Purpose: Move from abstract to personal. Each participant evaluates where they are right now.

Facilitator:

"I'm handing out a self-assessment. This is for you — no one else will see it. Answer honestly. There are no wrong answers, and there is no shame in any number you write down."

Distribute the Burnout Self-Assessment handout.

Burnout Self-Assessment

Rate each statement from 1 (never) to 5 (almost always):

1. I feel emotionally drained at the end of the day. ____
2. I dread interactions that I used to find meaningful. ____
3. I feel like my efforts as a mentor don't make a difference. ____
4. I am more impatient or irritable than I used to be. ____
5. I have trouble sleeping or my mind races at night. ____
6. I avoid thinking about the problems my mentees are facing. ____
7. I feel resentful of the demands placed on me. ____
8. I have stopped doing things that used to bring me peace or joy. ____
9. I feel isolated, even when I'm around other people. ____
10. I carry other people's pain with me long after the conversation ends. ____

Scoring: - 10-20: Healthy range. Keep doing what you're doing. - 21-30: Caution zone. Some wear is showing. Time to be intentional about self-care. - 31-40: Warning zone. Burnout is in progress. Act now — not next week, now. - 41-50: Critical. You need support immediately. Talk to your facilitator or a fellow mentor today.

Allow 5 minutes to complete.

Facilitator:

*"I'm not going to ask you to share your score. But I am going to ask this: **Is anyone surprised by their number?**"*

Allow 3-4 people to respond. Don't push — just listen.

"Here's what I want you to understand: being in the caution or warning zone doesn't mean you're a bad mentor. It means you're a human being who has been giving to others. The problem isn't that you're tired. The problem is if you ignore it."

Self-Care Is a Practice, Not an Event (20 minutes)

Purpose: Reframe self-care from something you do once in a while to something you build into every day — especially within the constraints of a correctional environment.

Facilitator:

"When people hear 'self-care,' they think of spa days and vacations. Obviously, that's not our reality. But self-care doesn't require freedom or money. Self-care is a daily discipline of protecting your capacity to serve.

*Let me say that again: **Self-care is protecting your capacity to serve.***

It's not selfish. It's not soft. It's strategic. A mentor who burns out doesn't just lose himself — he loses everyone who depends on him. So taking care of yourself isn't optional. It's part of the job."

Four Dimensions of Self-Care — Write on board or read aloud:

"Self-care has four dimensions, and you need all four. Not every day, but regularly.

1. Physical — *What your body needs. In here, this means: exercise, sleep discipline, eating as well as you can, fresh air when you can get it. Your body absorbs stress. If you don't move it, the stress stays locked in.*

2. Emotional — *Processing what you carry. Journaling. Talking to someone you trust. Crying if you need to — and yes, I said that in a room full of men in prison. Tears are pressure release valves. Stuffing emotions doesn't make them go away. It makes them come out sideways.*

3. Mental — *Guarding what goes into your mind. Reading something that feeds you. Avoiding the negativity spiral. Taking breaks from the dorm when you can. Having at least one thing you do that has nothing to do with mentoring — a hobby, a study, a creative pursuit. Something that reminds you that you're more than your role.*

4. Relational — *Your connections. Who refuels you? Who do you go to when you're struggling? If the answer is 'nobody,' that's the problem we need to fix today."*

Group discussion (10 min):

*"Let's get practical. For each of those four dimensions, I want to hear from this group: **What actually works in here?** What have you found that keeps you going? Be specific."*

Facilitate the discussion. Capture ideas on the board or have a participant write them down. Examples that should emerge:

Physical: - Push-ups, burpees, running in the yard - Consistent sleep schedule — same time every night - Stretching or simple yoga before bed - Drinking water instead of coffee all day

Emotional: - Journaling — especially on hard days - Talking to one trusted person (not dumping on everyone) - Music — listening or creating - Prayer or meditation - Letting yourself feel without judging the feeling

Mental: - Reading — especially things that inspire - Studying — staying sharp, learning new things - Setting boundaries on negativity: walking away from toxic conversations - Time alone — even 15 minutes of quiet

Relational: - Regular check-ins with fellow mentors - One person you can be 100% honest with - The supervision session itself — don't skip it - Writing letters to family — maintaining outside connections

Facilitator:

"Notice something about this list: none of it requires permission from anyone. None of it requires special access. Every single thing on here is available to you right now. The question is whether you'll be disciplined enough to do it."

Building Your Support Network (15 minutes)

Purpose: Mentors cannot sustain themselves alone. They need a network of fellow mentors who understand the work and can hold them accountable to their own well-being.

Facilitator:

*"There's one piece of self-care that's more important than all the rest: **having people**.*

You cannot do this work alone. I don't care how strong you are, how disciplined you are, how much experience you have. If you try to carry the weight of mentoring by yourself, you will eventually break. Not because you're weak. Because the load is too heavy for one person.

That's why FORGE is built on a community of mentors — not individual mentors operating solo. You need people who understand what you're going through. People who can look you in the eye and say, 'You're not okay right now, and that's okay — let's talk about it.'"

Exercise: Your Support Network Map (10 min)

"In your journal, I want you to draw a simple map. Put yourself in the center. Then answer these questions:

- 1. **Who is your go-to person?** The one person you can call on when you're struggling. Write their name closest to yours.*
- 2. **Who are your 2-3 fellow mentors** who understand this work and can support you? Write their names.*
- 3. **Who do you support?** Who comes to you? Write their names.*
- 4. **Where is the gap?** Is there a type of support you're missing? A person you need but don't have?*

If you looked at your map and your name is sitting alone with nobody around it — that's the most important thing you learn today. Fix that. This week."

Brief share-out (5 min): 2-3 volunteers share what they noticed about their map. No pressure.

Facilitator:

"This group — right here, the men in this circle — is your primary support network. Use it. When you're certified, that doesn't change. You still come to supervision. You still check in with each other. You still have each other's backs. That's how FORGE works. Not lone wolves. A pack."

Maintaining Boundaries Long-Term (15 minutes)

Purpose: The boundaries taught in Phase 2 don't maintain themselves. Over time, boundaries erode — especially when you care deeply about the people you serve.

Facilitator:

"Let's talk about something that happens to every mentor eventually: boundary erosion.

In Phase 2, we taught you where the lines are. What you do and don't do. Who you are and who you're not.

But here's what nobody tells you: boundaries don't stay in place by themselves. They erode over time. Slowly.

Invisibly. Until one day you realize you're carrying things that aren't yours to carry.

Let me give you some examples."

Boundary Erosion Warning Signs:

"You start checking on a mentee at all hours because you're worried about him. That's caring — but it's also losing the boundary between your time and their time.

A mentee starts coming to you for every problem, big and small, and you let it happen because it feels good to be needed. That's not mentoring — that's dependency. And you're feeding it.

You take it personally when a mentee makes a bad decision. You feel like you failed. That's boundary confusion — their choices are not your responsibility. Your job is to equip them to choose. The choosing is on them.

You start bending rules for people you're close to. 'It's okay this one time.' 'He's different.' 'I know he didn't mean it.' That's the beginning of the end of your credibility.

You stop going to supervision because you think you've got it figured out. That's the most dangerous boundary erosion of all — because supervision is what keeps you honest."

Group discussion:

"Have any of you experienced boundary erosion in the last few weeks? Where have your lines started to blur?"

Allow honest discussion. This is a supervision session — treat it like one. Address real situations from the field.

Personal Sustainability Plan (15 minutes)

Purpose: Each participant creates a concrete, written plan for maintaining their well-being as a mentor.

Facilitator:

"Before we close, I want each of you to write a Personal Sustainability Plan. This goes in your portfolio — it's a requirement for certification. But more importantly, it's for you."

Distribute the Personal Sustainability Plan worksheet.

Personal Sustainability Plan

My warning signs (how I know I'm approaching burnout): 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

My daily practices (things I do every day to stay healthy): 1. _____ 2. _____

My weekly practices (things I do each week): 1. _____ 2. _____

My go-to person (who I talk to when I'm struggling): Name: _____

My backup (if my go-to person isn't available): Name: _____

My boundaries that are most at risk of eroding: 1. _____ 2. _____

What I will do when I notice a warning sign:

My commitment: I understand that self-care is not optional. It is part of my service. I commit to following this plan and to asking for help when I need it.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Allow 10 minutes to complete. Facilitator circulates and checks in individually — especially with anyone whose burnout score was high.

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Closing round. Complete this sentence:

'One thing I'm going to do differently this week to take care of myself is...'

Make it specific. Not 'I'll try to relax more.' Something concrete."

Send the talking piece around.

Facilitator (closing):

"You are three weeks from certification. Three weeks. Some of you are going to cross a finish line that most people didn't think you'd reach. But I want you to hear this:

The finish line is not the end. It's the beginning. Certification means you're ready to serve — for real, for good, for a long time. And the only way you can do that is if you protect the person doing the serving. That person is you.

Service Over Self does not mean self-destruction. It means giving from a place of health — not from a place of emptiness. Take care of yourselves. The people you serve need you whole.

Wednesday — independent sessions. Thursday — field work and training the next cohort. Bring your sustainability plans. Bring your honesty. See you out there."

Session 97 Checklist

- Room in circle formation
- Opening circle completed with energy-level check
- Compassion fatigue and burnout defined and discussed
- Burnout Self-Assessment completed individually
- Four dimensions of self-care taught and discussed
- Practical self-care strategies generated by the group
- Support network mapping exercise completed
- Boundary erosion discussed with real examples
- Personal Sustainability Plan completed and signed
- Closing circle completed with specific self-care commitments
- Individual follow-up planned for anyone scoring in warning/critical range



SESSION 98: Field Work — Independent Sessions

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Independent practice in assigned areas

Session Plan

Participants conduct independent facilitation sessions in their assigned dorms or units. This is one of the final independent sessions before certification assessment.

Pre-Session

Each participant should: - Review their session plan (prepared in advance) - Check in briefly with their support person or fellow mentor before heading out - Ground themselves using a regulation technique

During Session

Participants deliver their planned session independently. Periodic observation by the facilitator or a senior mentor for assessment purposes.

Post-Session

- Complete a session reflection in their journal:
- What went well?
- What would I do differently?
- How am I feeling after this session? (Apply the burnout self-assessment lens)
- Did I maintain my boundaries?
- Note any situations that need to be brought to Tuesday supervision

Facilitator Note

Use this session for scheduled observations of participants who still need independent session assessments for their portfolio. Score using the teaching demonstration rubric from Part IV.



SESSION 99: Field Work — Mentoring, Community Circles, and Training Next Cohort

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Field work in assigned areas

Session Plan

Mentoring Meetings

Participants meet with assigned mentees for one-on-one or small group mentoring. Focus areas this week: - Check in on mentee progress and challenges - Practice sustainability conversations — model self-care by discussing it openly with mentees - Document all interactions in mentoring logs

Community Circles

Participants who are scheduled to run community circles this week should do so. Suggested circle prompt for this week:

"What does it look like to take care of yourself in here — honestly? Not what you think I want to hear. What do you actually do?"

Training Next Cohort

Participants who are assisting with the next cohort's Phase 1 sessions should co-facilitate as assigned. This week's focus: model the sustainability principles you just learned. Don't just teach the curriculum — show the next cohort what a healthy mentor looks like.

End of Day

- Update mentoring hours log
 - Update mentee progress notes
 - Note any concerns or situations for next Tuesday's supervision session
-

Session 99 Checklist

- Mentoring meetings completed with assigned mentees
- Mentoring logs updated
- Community circle conducted (if scheduled)
- Next cohort training session co-facilitated (if assigned)
- All field work hours documented
- Concerns noted for next supervision session

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 33

What to Watch For

Who is struggling. The burnout self-assessment will surface people who are running on fumes. Don't wait for them to come to you — check in individually after the session. A mentor who is depleted needs support, not criticism.

Resistance to self-care. Some men will see self-care as weakness or selfishness. This is the prison culture talking. Address it directly: "The toughest thing you can do is admit you need something. That's not weakness. That's the same honesty we demand in every other part of this program."

Boundary erosion in real time. During the discussion, listen for specific examples of boundaries being crossed. These are supervision issues — follow up on them. If a participant has gotten too enmeshed with a mentee, help them re-establish the line this week.

Isolation. Anyone whose support network map showed them alone needs immediate attention. Pair them with a fellow mentor. Build the connection. No one in FORGE operates solo.

Common Week 33 Challenges

"I don't have time for self-care." Response: "You don't have time not to. Every minute you spend on self-care extends the months and years you can serve. Ignoring burnout doesn't save time — it steals it."

"I'm fine." The most dangerous words in mentoring. Push gently: "I'm glad you feel that way. But 'fine' is not an assessment — it's a deflection. What does your self-assessment actually say?"

"My mentees need me too much for me to take a break." Response: "If you collapse, who helps them then? The best thing you can do for your mentees is make sure you're still standing next month. And the month after that."

Preparation for Week 34

- Review servant leadership pipeline materials
- Prepare discussion questions on developing other mentors

- Have examples ready of feedback models appropriate for mentor-to-mentor development
- Think about which participants show potential for future senior mentor roles — this week's content will plant those seeds

Week 34: Leading Leaders

Week 34 Overview

Purpose: Shift participants from thinking of themselves as mentors to thinking of themselves as developers of mentors. The highest expression of FORGE leadership is not what you do — it is what you build in others. This week teaches the servant leadership pipeline: the principle that your ultimate job is to make yourself replaceable by raising up people who can do what you do.

Sessions This Week: - Session 100 (Tuesday): Leading Leaders — Supervision Session - Session 101 (Wednesday): Field work — Independent sessions - Session 102 (Thursday): Field work — Mentoring + community circles

Materials Needed: - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process - "Mentor Identification Checklist" handout (1 per participant — see below) - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available)

SESSION 100: Leading Leaders

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Explain the difference between "doing" and "developing" — and why the shift matters 2. Identify the qualities to look for in a potential mentor 3. Give feedback that grows people rather than diminishing them 4. Describe the servant leadership pipeline and their role in sustaining FORGE beyond themselves 5. Apply practical strategies for developing emerging leaders in their dorms

Session Plan

Opening Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Check-in round. Today's question:

Think about someone who saw something in you before you saw it in yourself. Who was that person, and what did they see?

If you can't think of anyone — if nobody ever did that for you — say that. Because that absence is exactly why this session matters."

Send the talking piece around. Facilitator goes first.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Some of you had someone. Some of you didn't. Either way, you're about to become that person for someone else. That's what today is about."

From Doing to Developing (20 minutes)

Purpose: Challenge participants to think beyond their own mentoring and toward building the next generation.

Facilitator:

"I want to tell you something that might be hard to hear. Ready?"

Your goal is to become unnecessary.

Not unimportant. Not unwanted. Unnecessary — because the people you've developed can do what you do.

Better than you, eventually. That's the goal. And if that doesn't sit well with you, pay attention to why.

Because anything in you that resists that idea is ego talking. And ego has no place in servant leadership.

Let me explain what I mean."

The Three Levels of Impact:

"There are three levels of impact a mentor can have. Most people get stuck at Level 1. The best mentors operate at Level 3.

Level 1: I do the work. *You mentor people. You facilitate sessions. You run circles. You de-escalate conflicts.*

That's valuable. That's what you've been doing. But if you get transferred tomorrow, what happens?

Everything you built stops. Because it depended on you.

Level 2: I help others do the work. *You don't just mentor — you teach others to mentor. You share your skills.*

You coach. You give feedback. Now the work continues even when you're not in the room. That's

multiplication.

Level 3: I develop people who develop others. *This is the servant leadership pipeline. You develop mentors*

who develop mentors. Now the work doesn't just continue — it grows. It outlives you. It outgrows you. That's

legacy.
FORGE is designed to operate at Level 3. Every cohort trains the next. Every mentor develops future
mentors. The program doesn't depend on any one person — it depends on the pipeline."

Pause.

"Right now, most of you are operating at Level 1, maybe Level 2. That's appropriate — you're still learning.

But I need you to start thinking at Level 3. Because in two weeks, you'll be certified. And the question won't
be 'Are you a good mentor?' It will be 'Are you building good mentors?'"

What to Look For (20 minutes)

Purpose: Teach participants how to identify potential mentors — not based on personality, but on character indicators.

Facilitator:

"One of the most important things you'll ever do as a FORGE mentor is identify the next one. Not recruit — identify. There's a difference.

Recruiting is selling someone on the program. Identifying is recognizing the raw material of a mentor in someone who might not see it in himself yet. Remember what you just said in the opening circle? Someone saw something in you before you saw it in yourself. Now it's your turn to do that for someone else.

So what do you look for? Not who you'd expect."

What to Look For in a Potential Mentor — Read each one, then discuss:

1. He's already serving — without being asked. You'll see him helping the new arrival before anyone tells him to. He cleans the common area. He checks on the quiet guy. He does the unglamorous work. Not for credit. Not because he's in a program. Because something in him says, 'This needs doing.' That's the raw material.

2. He's honest about his own struggles. Be careful of the guy who acts like he has it all figured out. Look for the one who says, 'I'm working on it.' Humility — real humility, not performed humility — is the foundation of a mentor.

3. He handles conflict without escalating. Watch what he does when someone disrespects him. Watch what he does when tension rises. If his instinct is to de-escalate — even imperfectly — that's someone worth developing.

4. People trust him. Not because he's powerful. Not because he's popular. Because he keeps his word. Because he doesn't gossip. Because when someone tells him something, it stays between them. Trust is the currency of mentoring, and some men earn it naturally.

5. He's teachable. This is the most important one. Raw talent means nothing if someone can't receive feedback. Look for the man who listens when corrected. Who says, 'You're right — let me try again.' Who treats mistakes as learning, not humiliation.

6. He has a reason. Look for purpose. The man who has something driving him — a child he wants to be better for, a debt he feels to his community, a version of himself he's committed to becoming. Purpose sustains a mentor when the work gets hard."

What to Be Cautious About:

"Now let me tell you what does NOT necessarily make someone a good mentor candidate — even though it might look like it.

Charisma. *Some of the most charismatic people in a dorm are the most dangerous. Charm without character is manipulation. Don't confuse influence with integrity.*

Seniority. *Time served doesn't equal wisdom earned. Some men have been in for 20 years and haven't changed. Others have been in for 2 and have transformed. Look at growth, not tenure.*

Eagerness. *Be careful of the man who is too eager. Ask yourself why. Is he drawn to service or to status? Does he want to help people or wear a title? The right motivation matters as much as the right skills.*

Your own reflection. *Don't just look for people like you. The best mentors come in all temperaments. The quiet, steady presence is just as valuable as the dynamic, vocal one. Build a diverse team."*

Exercise: Mentor Identification (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"In your journal, I want you to think about the men you've been working with — in your dorm, in the next cohort, in your community circles. Write down the name of one person you think has the potential to become a FORGE mentor. Then answer these questions about that person:

- 1. What do I see in him that makes me think he could be a mentor?*
- 2. Does he see it in himself?*
- 3. What would he need to develop?*
- 4. What's one thing I could do this week to invest in his growth?"*

Allow 8 minutes. Facilitator circulates.

Brief share-out (2 min): 2-3 volunteers share who they identified and what they see in that person. No pressure to share names if it's sensitive.

How to Give Feedback That Grows People (25 minutes)

Purpose: Teach the skill of developmental feedback — feedback that doesn't just correct behavior but builds capacity.

Facilitator:

"You learned the SBI model in Phase 1 — Situation, Behavior, Impact. That's a solid tool for addressing problems. But when you're developing a future mentor, you need more than that. You need feedback that grows people. Feedback that makes them better, not smaller.

Here's the thing about feedback in our environment: most of us have only experienced two kinds. Criticism — which tears you down. And silence — which tells you nothing. Neither one develops anyone.

Today I'm going to teach you a feedback approach that does something different. It builds."

The G.R.O.W. Feedback Model:

"When you're developing someone, use G.R.O.W.:

G — Ground it in what you observed. *Be specific. Not 'You did good.' That's useless. Instead: 'When that argument broke out between Davis and Thompson, you stepped in within 30 seconds. You lowered your voice. You positioned yourself between them without being threatening. That was effective.'*

R — Recognize the effort, not just the result. *Developing people need to know that their effort matters, even when the outcome wasn't perfect. 'I know that was a hard conversation. The fact that you had it at all shows growth.' This is especially important early on, when someone is still learning and their results will be inconsistent.*

O — Open a question. *Instead of telling them what to do differently, ask them. 'What would you do differently next time?' 'What did you notice about how he responded when you said that?' 'If you could replay that moment, what would you change?' Questions develop thinking. Answers just give directions.*

W — What's next? *End with a clear, actionable next step. Not a lecture. One thing they can work on. 'This week, I want you to practice lowering your voice earlier in the conversation — before the other person is fully escalated. Try it once and tell me how it went.'"*

Practice Exercise (15 min):

"Pair up. Here's the scenario: Your partner just facilitated a community circle for the first time. It went okay — not great, not terrible. The opening was strong. The middle got off track because he let one person dominate the conversation. The closing was rushed.

Using the G.R.O.W. model, give your partner feedback on that performance. Be specific. Be honest. Be developmental. Then switch."

Pairs practice (10 min). Facilitator circulates, listens, coaches.

Debrief (5 min):

"How did that feel — both giving and receiving? What was different about getting feedback this way versus the way you usually get it?"

Allow 3-4 responses.

"Most men in here have never had someone invest in their development with this kind of care and specificity. That's what you're going to do as a FORGE mentor. Not criticize. Not stay silent. Grow people."

The Servant Leadership Pipeline (15 minutes)

Purpose: Connect everything to the sustainability of FORGE itself.

Facilitator:

"Let me bring it all together. What we're talking about today isn't just a skill set — it's the survival strategy of this entire program.

FORGE cannot depend on any one person. Not me. Not you. Not the administration. If any single person leaves and the program falls apart, we built it wrong.

The servant leadership pipeline looks like this:

You were a participant in Phase 1. Someone taught you. Someone invested in you. Someone saw something in you and said, 'This man could be a mentor.'

Now you're about to be certified. And your job — your primary job as a FORGE mentor — is not just to mentor. It's to find the next you. And develop him. And when he's ready, he finds the next him. And develops him.

That's how FORGE outlives all of us. That's how one program in one facility becomes a movement that changes the culture of this entire institution. Not through one class. Through a pipeline of leaders who create leaders who create leaders.

PEP in Texas has 90% of its staff made up of program graduates. GRIP at San Quentin has participants who've been through the program co-facilitating every single class. That didn't happen because one person was great. It happened because they built a pipeline.

You are the pipeline. Starting now."

Pause.

"One last thought. The day someone you developed stands up in front of a group and facilitates a session better than you could — that's not a threat to you. That's your greatest achievement. That's the moment you know you did your job.

Service Over Self means: it was never about you. It was always about what you build in others."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Closing round. Complete this sentence:

'The kind of mentor who develops other mentors is someone who...'

One sentence."

Send the talking piece around.

Facilitator (closing):

"Two weeks from certification. This week in the field, I want you to practice what we discussed:

- 1. Identify one person who has mentor potential. Start investing in them intentionally.*
- 2. Give at least one piece of G.R.O.W. feedback to someone you're developing.*
- 3. Continue your self-care plan from last week — don't let it slide.*

Next Tuesday: Your Legacy. We're going to talk about the kind of culture you're building and what you'll leave behind. You'll also write your Mentor Philosophy Statement — it's one of the final pieces of your certification portfolio.

Wednesday and Thursday: independent practice. Make these sessions count. They're your last field work sessions before certification week.

See you Tuesday."

Session 100 Checklist

- Room in circle formation
- Opening circle completed
- Three levels of impact taught (doing, helping, developing)
- Six qualities of a potential mentor discussed

- Caution signs discussed (charisma, seniority, eagerness, self-reflection)
- Mentor identification exercise completed in journals
- G.R.O.W. feedback model taught
- Paired feedback practice completed
- Servant leadership pipeline explained and connected to FORGE sustainability
- Closing circle completed
- Field work assignments clear for Wednesday and Thursday



SESSION 101: Field Work — Independent Sessions

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Independent practice in assigned areas

Session Plan

Participants conduct independent facilitation sessions. This is one of the final sessions before certification assessment — facilitators should complete any remaining independent session observations and scoring.

Pre-Session

Each participant should: - Review their session plan - Identify one opportunity during today's session to practice the G.R.O.W. feedback model with a participant who shows potential - Ground themselves with a regulation technique

During Session

Participants deliver their planned session independently. If being observed for assessment, the observer uses the teaching demonstration rubric from Part IV.

Post-Session

- Complete a session reflection in their journal
- Note: Did I identify any potential future mentors during today's session? What did I see?
- Document any situations for Tuesday supervision

Facilitator Note

Ensure all participants have completed the required 4 independently delivered sessions by the end of Week 35. Any remaining observations should be scheduled immediately.

SESSION 102: Field Work — Mentoring and Community Circles

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Field work in assigned areas

Session Plan

Mentoring Meetings

Participants meet with assigned mentees. Focus this week: - Practice developmental feedback using the G.R.O.W. model - Begin identifying mentees or dorm members who show mentor potential — have the conversation if appropriate: "Have you ever thought about FORGE?" - Document all interactions in mentoring logs

Community Circles

Participants running community circles this week should consider this prompt:

"Who is someone in your life who invested in you? What did they do that made a difference? And who are you investing in now?"

End of Day

- Update mentoring hours log
- Update mentee progress notes
- Verify total mentoring hours are on track (minimum 60 hours required for certification)
- Begin preparing for Week 35: Mentor Philosophy Statement (start thinking about what kind of mentor you are)

Session 102 Checklist

- [] Mentoring meetings completed with assigned mentees

- [] G.R.O.W. feedback practiced with at least one person
- [] Mentoring logs updated
- [] Community circle conducted (if scheduled)
- [] All field work hours documented
- [] Total mentoring hours verified against 60-hour requirement
- [] Concerns noted for next supervision session



FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 34

What to Watch For

Ego resistance. The concept of "becoming unnecessary" will challenge some participants. Watch for defensiveness or dismissiveness. Men who have worked hard to earn the mentor identity may feel threatened by the idea that their job is to give it away. Address this one-on-one if needed: "Your value doesn't decrease because someone else's increases. That's scarcity thinking. FORGE runs on abundance."

Identifying the wrong people. During the mentor identification exercise, pay attention to who participants name. If someone identifies a charismatic but manipulative individual, that's a coaching opportunity. Help them distinguish between influence and integrity.

Feedback avoidance. Some participants will struggle with giving honest feedback — especially to people they've built relationships with. This is a boundary issue: caring about someone and being honest with them are not in conflict. They are the same thing.

Pipeline awareness. Begin thinking about which of the current cohort are strong candidates for Senior Mentor roles after certification. These are the men who will sustain the program long-term. Note your observations.

Preparation for Week 35

- Prepare Mentor Philosophy Statement guidelines and examples
- Review the complete FORGE Mentor Portfolio checklist — participants will need to see the full list to prepare for Week 36
- Begin coordinating the Week 36 certification panel: identify the 3-person panel members (experienced mentor, facilitator, staff if possible)
- Prepare final simulation scenarios for the certification assessment
- Begin logistics planning for the graduation ceremony

Week 35: Your Legacy

Week 35 Overview

Purpose: This is the final supervision session before certification week. Participants reflect on the mentor culture they are building, the impact they have beyond their own individual efforts, and the kind of mentor they want to be for the long haul. Each participant writes a Mentor Philosophy Statement — a one-page declaration of who they are as a mentor and what they stand for. The week closes with the final field work sessions of the program.

Sessions This Week: - Session 103 (Tuesday): Your Legacy — Supervision Session - Session 104 (Wednesday): Final field work — Independent session - Session 105 (Thursday): Final field work — Mentoring + community circles

Materials Needed: - Journals/notebooks - Talking piece for circle process - Mentor Philosophy Statement guidelines (1 per participant — see below) - FORGE Mentor Portfolio Checklist (1 per participant — see below) - Certification Week schedule handout (1 per participant — see below) - Easel paper or whiteboard (if available)

SESSION 103: Your Legacy

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Facilitator(s):** Program Lead + Senior Mentor

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: 1. Articulate the mentor culture they are building and why it matters 2. Describe their impact beyond their individual mentoring relationships 3. Write a Mentor Philosophy Statement that reflects their identity, values, and commitments as a FORGE mentor 4. Verify their portfolio is complete and ready for the certification review 5. Understand the full certification week schedule and requirements

Session Plan

Opening Circle (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"This is our last supervision session before certification week. Let that settle for a moment.

Thirty-four weeks ago, you walked into a room — most of you not sure what you were getting into. Some of you were skeptical. Some were scared. Some thought you'd drop out by Week 3. And here you are. Seven days from the finish line.

Today's check-in is different. I want you to think back — all the way back to Week 1. Session 1. The very first thing I asked you:

'Why are you here today?'

You answered that question 34 weeks ago. Answer it again now.

'Why are you still here?'"

Send the talking piece around. Facilitator goes last. Let this round take as long as it needs — these responses matter. This is one of the most important circles of the entire program.

Facilitator (after the round):

"Listen to the difference between what you said then and what you said now. That difference is called growth. And every man in this circle earned it."

The Culture You're Building (20 minutes)

Purpose: Elevate participants' thinking from individual mentoring to cultural transformation.

Facilitator:

"I want to talk about something bigger than your individual mentoring. I want to talk about culture. Every dorm, every unit, every facility has a culture. And most of the time, that culture just happens. Nobody designs it. Nobody chooses it. It emerges from whoever has the most influence — and in most dorms, the culture gets set by the loudest, the most aggressive, or the most connected. The result is what you already know: tension, intimidation, silence, survival mode.

FORGE exists to change that. Not by fighting the existing culture head-on. By building something better alongside it. Something that people are drawn to — not because they're forced, but because they can see it works.

You — each of you — are building a culture. Every time you de-escalate a conflict instead of watching it explode, you're building culture. Every time you sit with someone and listen instead of judging, you're building culture. Every time you run a circle and men share things they've never said out loud, you're building culture. Every time a new arrival sees a FORGE mentor and thinks, 'Maybe this place is different,' you're building culture.

*The question is: **What kind of culture are you building?**"*

Group discussion (10 min):

"I want to hear from you. In the dorms where you've been working — what has changed? Not what you hope has changed. What have you actually seen?"

Facilitate the discussion. Push for specific examples: - A conflict that was handled differently because of FORGE presence - A man who changed his behavior because a mentor invested in him - A dorm dynamic that shifted — even slightly - Staff who noticed a difference - Someone who said something that showed the culture is moving

Facilitator (after the discussion):

"That's your legacy. Not a certificate on a wall. That. The real, observable difference in how people treat each other because you chose to serve."

Your Impact Beyond Yourself (15 minutes)

Purpose: Help participants see the ripple effect of their work.

Facilitator:

"Let me tell you something you might not have realized. Your impact is bigger than you know.

There's a concept called the 'ripple effect.' When you throw a stone into water, the ripples extend far beyond where the stone landed. Mentoring works the same way.

When you mentor a man and he changes how he handles conflict — he doesn't just change for himself. He changes for his bunkmate, who no longer has to live in fear. He changes for his children, who will visit a father who is calm instead of volatile. He changes for the CO on his unit, who has one less situation to worry about. He changes for the man he'll meet five years from now who is struggling — because he'll know how to help.

You didn't just help one person. You started a chain. And that chain extends beyond anything you'll ever see.

Think about this: somewhere, years from now, a man you've never met will make a better decision because of something you taught someone today. You won't know about it. You won't get credit for it. But it will happen.

That's legacy."

Pause.

"I want you to sit with that for a moment. In a place designed to make you feel worthless — you are changing lives you'll never even know about. Don't let anyone tell you your time here was wasted."

Writing Your Mentor Philosophy Statement (30 minutes)

Purpose: Each participant writes a one-page statement that defines who they are as a mentor. This is a required portfolio piece for certification.

Facilitator:

*"One of the final pieces of your certification portfolio is your Mentor Philosophy Statement. This is a one-page document that answers one question: **What kind of mentor am I?**"*

This isn't an essay for a grade. This is a declaration. It's who you are, what you believe, and how you operate. When you're tired, when you're frustrated, when you're not sure what to do — this statement is your anchor. It reminds you why you do this and how you do it.

Let me give you a structure."

Mentor Philosophy Statement Guidelines:

"Your statement should cover five areas. Write at least a paragraph on each. Use your own words — not what you think I want to hear. Be honest. Be specific. Be you.

- 1. Why I mentor.** What drives you? What's your motivation — not the surface answer, the real one? What happened in your life that makes this work matter to you? Why did you stay when it got hard?*
- 2. What I believe about people.** Do you believe people can change? Really? What do you believe about the men you serve? What assumptions do you carry into every mentoring interaction?*
- 3. How I show up.** What do people experience when they're in a room with you? What is your mentoring style? Are you the calm, steady presence? The direct challenger? The patient listener? How do you build trust? How do you handle conflict?*
- 4. My commitments.** What will you always do? What will you never do? What are your non-negotiables as a mentor? What boundaries do you maintain? What standards do you hold yourself to?*
- 5. What I'm still working on.** No mentor is finished. What's your growing edge? What do you need to get better at? Where are you still developing? Including this section is not weakness — it's the most important part. It proves you're still a learner."*

Facilitator:

"You have 20 minutes to write a draft. It doesn't have to be perfect today — you can refine it before next week. But I want you to get the bones down right now, while you're in this room, in this circle, with these men."

20 minutes of writing. Room should be quiet. Facilitator writes alongside participants — modeling the practice.

Optional sharing (5 min): If time allows and the group is willing, 2-3 volunteers read a portion of their statement. No critique — just witness.

Facilitator:

"Finish this by Thursday. It goes in your portfolio. When you stand before the review board next week, this statement is part of what they'll evaluate. Make it real. Make it yours."

Portfolio Preparation and Certification Week Briefing (20 minutes)

Purpose: Ensure every participant knows exactly what is required for certification and has time to close any gaps.

Facilitator:

"We need to shift gears. Next week is certification week. I'm going to walk you through exactly what happens, what you need to have ready, and what the panel will be looking for. No surprises."

Distribute the FORGE Mentor Portfolio Checklist and Certification Week Schedule.

FORGE Mentor Portfolio — Complete Checklist

Phase 1 Materials: - Minimum 15 thinking reports - Emotion tracking logs (at least 3 weeks) - Impact awareness letter (completed) - Self-assessment essay ("Who I was and who I am becoming") - Stakeholder commitment (5 specific actions) - 5 selected journal entries - Personal coping strategy card - Phase 1 knowledge check (passed — 70% minimum) - Peer evaluations from Phase 1

Phase 2 Materials: - 3 complete lesson plans (with objectives, activities, materials, debrief questions) - Simulation performance records (passed 3 of 5 — minimum 15/24 per simulation) - Co-facilitation observation notes (given by partner and facilitator) - MI practice logs (at least 5 documented interactions using OARS) - Teaching demonstration score (passed — minimum 12/20) - Self-reflection on mentor readiness (1-2 pages) - Peer evaluations from Phase 2

Phase 3 Materials: - Mentoring hours log — minimum 60 hours, broken down as: - Supervised co-facilitation (15+ hours) - Observed independent sessions (15+ hours) - Mentee meetings (20+ hours) - Community circles (10+ hours) - 4 session plans actually delivered (with observation scores — average 12/20+) - Mentee progress notes (for each assigned mentee) - Community circle plans and reflections (at least 2 independently conducted) - Personal growth narrative — "My FORGE journey" (3-5 pages) - Mentor philosophy statement — "What kind of mentor I am" (1 page) - Personal sustainability plan (from Week 33) - Peer evaluations from Phase 3

Review the checklist item by item. Ask each participant to self-assess:

"Go through this list. Check off what you have. Circle anything you're missing. If anything is circled, you have until Wednesday to complete it. Thursday at the absolute latest. No exceptions. An incomplete portfolio cannot go to the review board."

Allow 5 minutes for self-assessment. Then:

"Raise your hand if you have items missing."

Address gaps individually. Create a plan for each person to complete missing items before certification week.

Certification Week Schedule

Facilitator:

"Here's how next week works."

Session 106 — Tuesday: Final Simulation Assessment - 2 complex simulations per person, back to back - 3-person panel: experienced mentor, facilitator, staff member (if available) - Scenarios drawn from Category B or C — the hardest ones - Scored on the 6-category rubric: de-escalation, communication, boundaries, resolution, composure, referral judgment - **Minimum passing score: 16/24 per simulation** — higher bar than Phase 2 - Each simulation: 7 minutes of live response, followed by 5 minutes of panel questions - Dress sharp. Show respect for the process. This is your assessment.

Session 107 — Wednesday: Portfolio Defense - Present your complete FORGE Mentor Portfolio to the review panel - 15-minute presentation per person: - Walk through each phase: what you learned, how you grew, key experiences - Present your Mentor Philosophy Statement - Present your Personal Growth Narrative - Highlight your mentoring impact — specific examples - 10-minute Q&A from the panel - The panel is evaluating completeness, quality, authenticity, and readiness

Session 108 — Thursday: Graduation and Commissioning - Full ceremony - Details to follow — but know this: Thursday is a day you will remember for the rest of your life. Show up ready.

Facilitator:

"Questions about next week?"

Address all questions thoroughly. Leave nothing ambiguous.

"I'm going to say this once: do not take next week lightly. This is not a formality. You have to earn certification. The bar is high because the stakes are high. When you walk out of that room with a FORGE Mentor Certificate, it means something. It means you were tested and you passed. It means a panel of people who know this work looked at you and said, 'This man is ready.' That has to mean something, or the whole program means nothing.

Prepare like it matters. Because it does."

Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Final closing round before certification week. I want you to think back — one more time — to Week 1, Session 1. The very last exercise we did that first day. I asked you to complete a sentence:

'The kind of man I'm committed to becoming through FORGE is...'

Some of you wrote it in the front of your journal. I asked you to keep it there. Open your journal. Read what you wrote 34 weeks ago.

Now — in this circle, with these men — answer it again. Not what you wrote then. What you'd write now.

'The kind of man I have become through FORGE is...'"

Send the talking piece around. This will be emotional. Let it be. Do not rush this round.

Facilitator (after everyone has spoken):

"I heard what you said 34 weeks ago. And I hear what you're saying now. The distance between those two answers is the distance you've traveled. That distance is real. Nobody can take it from you.

Wednesday and Thursday are your final field sessions. Treat them with the weight they deserve. These are your last sessions as practitioners. Next time you walk into a room, you'll be walking in as certified mentors.

Finish your portfolios. Refine your philosophy statements. Prepare for simulations. Rest. Take care of yourselves.

I'll see you Tuesday. Certification day."

Session 103 Checklist

- Room in circle formation
- Opening circle completed — revisited "Why are you here?" from Week 1
- Culture-building discussion with specific examples from the field
- Ripple effect / impact beyond yourself discussed
- Mentor Philosophy Statement guidelines distributed
- 20-minute writing session completed (philosophy statement draft)
- FORGE Mentor Portfolio Checklist distributed and reviewed item by item
- Portfolio gaps identified for each participant with completion plan
- Certification Week Schedule distributed and explained
- Assessment requirements and scoring thresholds clarified
- Closing circle completed — revisited Week 1 commitment statement

- [] All participants clear on what must be completed before Tuesday



SESSION 104: Final Field Work — Independent Session

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Final independent facilitation session

Session Plan

This is the last independent facilitation session of the practicum. Treat it with the seriousness it deserves.

Pre-Session

Each participant should: - Prepare a strong session plan — this is your final session as a practitioner - Review their Mentor Philosophy Statement draft and bring it into how they facilitate - Complete any remaining portfolio items

During Session

Participants deliver their session independently. Any final observation assessments should be completed today.

Post-Session

Complete a final session reflection in the journal: - What have I learned about facilitation over these 12 weeks? - What is my greatest strength as a facilitator? - What would I tell someone who is about to start Phase 3? - How do I feel about certification week?

Document final field work hours.

SESSION 105: Final Field Work — Mentoring, Community Circles, and Closure

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Format:** Final field work session of the entire program

Session Plan

Final Mentoring Meetings

Participants meet with assigned mentees for the final time as practitioners. This is a transition point — after certification, the relationship continues, but the dynamic shifts from "practitioner being assessed" to "certified mentor."

Focus this session: - Acknowledge the relationship: what has this mentoring partnership meant? - Discuss what comes next: the mentor will continue to be available after certification - Affirm the mentee's growth — use G.R.O.W. feedback - Express genuine gratitude for the mentee's trust

Final Community Circle

If scheduled, this is the final community circle of the practicum. Suggested prompt:

"What is one thing that's different about this dorm — about this community — compared to when we started? And what do you want to carry forward?"

End-of-Practicum Documentation

- Finalize all mentoring hours logs — ensure 60-hour minimum is met
- Complete all mentee progress notes
- Finalize community circle records
- Assemble complete FORGE Mentor Portfolio:
 - All Phase 1 materials
 - All Phase 2 materials
 - All Phase 3 materials

- Personal Growth Narrative (3-5 pages, final version)
- Mentor Philosophy Statement (1 page, final version)
- Personal Sustainability Plan (final version)

Portfolio Due

All portfolio materials must be compiled and ready to present by end of day Thursday. There will be no additional time before the certification assessment on Tuesday.

Session 105 Checklist

- Final mentoring meetings completed with all assigned mentees
 - Final community circle conducted (if scheduled)
 - All mentoring logs finalized — 60-hour minimum verified
 - All mentee progress notes completed
 - Personal Growth Narrative finalized (3-5 pages)
 - Mentor Philosophy Statement finalized (1 page)
 - Personal Sustainability Plan finalized
 - Complete FORGE Mentor Portfolio assembled and ready for Tuesday
 - All field work hours documented
-

FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 35

What to Watch For

Anxiety. Certification week is approaching and some participants will be nervous. That's healthy. Distinguish between productive nervousness (which sharpens performance) and debilitating anxiety (which undermines it). For the latter, provide individual reassurance: "You've been doing this work for 12 weeks. The simulation is just a formalized version of what you do every day."

Incomplete portfolios. This is the most common barrier to certification. Be relentless about the checklist. If someone is missing significant items, be honest about whether they can realistically complete them. A participant who isn't ready is better served by a conditional certification with a plan than by being rushed through incomplete.

Emotional intensity. The closing circle — revisiting the Week 1 commitment — will be powerful. Some men will be emotional. Let it happen. This is what 34 weeks of honest work looks like. Don't manage the emotion. Witness it.

Legacy conversations. Listen carefully during the culture discussion. What participants describe seeing in their dorms is the most authentic measure of whether FORGE is working. Document these stories — they are powerful evidence for program evaluation and for motivating future cohorts.

Preparation for Week 36

This is critical. Everything must be ready:

Tuesday (Session 106 — Final Simulation Assessment): - Confirm 3-person panel: experienced mentor + facilitator + staff (if possible) - Select 2 complex simulation scenarios per participant from Category B or C - Prepare scoring rubric sheets (1 per simulation per panelist) - Set up room: panel table facing performance area, chairs for observers - Prepare schedule: 25 minutes per participant (7 min scenario + 5 min panel questions + 5 min scoring + 3 min transition + 5 min buffer) - Have timer ready - Prepare role players for simulations (use senior mentors or volunteers)

Wednesday (Session 107 — Portfolio Defense): - Confirm panel (same or different from Tuesday) - Prepare evaluation forms for portfolio defense - Schedule: 25 minutes per participant (15 min presentation + 10 min

Q&A) - Review all submitted portfolios in advance if possible - Prepare questions based on individual portfolios

Thursday (Session 108 — Graduation and Commissioning): - Prepare certificates (one per graduate) - Prepare ceremony script (see Week 36 lesson plan) - Coordinate with facility administration for any necessary approvals - Invite any staff supporters, chaplain, or administration willing to attend - Arrange room setup for ceremony - Prepare any special recognitions - Have the FORGE charge ready: "Leadership is not granted. It is forged."

Week 36: Certification — THE FINAL WEEK

Week 36 Overview

Purpose: This is it. The culmination of 9 months, 108 sessions, and more growth than most of these men thought possible. Week 36 is the final assessment and certification of FORGE Mentors. Every session this week carries weight. Tuesday tests competence under pressure. Wednesday tests depth of learning and readiness. Thursday honors the journey and commissions these men into active service. This week must be run with the seriousness, rigor, and dignity it deserves.

Sessions This Week: - Session 106 (Tuesday): Final Simulation Assessment — Panel evaluation - Session 107 (Wednesday): Portfolio Defense — Panel review and Q&A - Session 108 (Thursday): Graduation and Commissioning — Full ceremony

Materials Needed:

Session 106: - Final Simulation Scoring Rubric sheets (2 per participant, 1 copy per panelist) - Selected simulation scenarios from Category B and C (2 per participant) - Timer - Panel table and chairs - Role players (senior mentors or trained volunteers)

Session 107: - Portfolio Defense Evaluation Forms (1 per participant per panelist) - Review Board Decision Forms (1 per participant) - Complete FORGE Mentor Portfolios (submitted by each participant)

Session 108: - FORGE Mentor Certificates (1 per graduate) - Ceremony script (see below) - Talking piece - Post-Certification Expectations handout (1 per graduate) - Commitment to Service forms (1 per graduate) - Room arranged for ceremony — chairs in a circle or semicircle facing front

SESSION 106: Final Simulation Assessment

Day: Tuesday **Duration:** 2+ hours (may extend based on cohort size) **Panel:** 3-person panel — experienced FORGE mentor, facilitator, staff member (if available)

Purpose

This is the final skills assessment. Two complex simulations per participant, drawn from the hardest scenario categories. The bar is higher than Phase 2: minimum 16/24 per simulation. This is not a learning exercise — it is a competency verification. The panel is answering one question: **Is this person ready to represent FORGE independently?**

Assessment Structure

Format (per participant — approximately 25 minutes each)

Time	Activity
0:00-0:02	Scenario setup — facilitator reads the scenario, assigns roles
0:02-0:09	Simulation 1 — participant responds in real time (7 minutes)
0:09-0:14	Panel questions on Simulation 1 (5 minutes)
0:14-0:16	Scoring break — panel scores independently (2 minutes)
0:16-0:18	Scenario 2 setup
0:18-0:25	Simulation 2 — participant responds in real time (7 minutes)
0:25-0:30	Panel questions on Simulation 2 (5 minutes)
0:30-0:32	Scoring break (2 minutes)
0:32-0:35	Transition to next participant (3 minutes)

Simulation Rules

Facilitator (to the full group before assessments begin):

"Today is your final simulation assessment. Here's how it works.

You will face two scenarios. You won't know what they are until the moment they begin. Each scenario is drawn from the most complex situations a FORGE mentor can encounter — Category B and C. Mentor challenges. Safety situations. The real ones.

You have 7 minutes per scenario. There is no freeze-and-coach. There is no replay. This is your final performance. Show us what you've learned.

After each scenario, the panel will ask you questions for 5 minutes. These questions are not trick questions — they're designed to understand your thinking. Why did you do what you did? What were you considering? What would you do differently? Answer honestly.

The minimum passing score is 16 out of 24 per simulation. That's an average of 2.67 per category — above 'Competent' on most criteria. This is a higher bar than Phase 2. We raised the bar because the work you're about to do is real, and the people you serve deserve mentors who are ready.

A few ground rules: - You may not consult notes, your portfolio, or other participants during the simulation - You respond as you would in a real situation — no narrating what you would do, actually do it - If the scenario involves a safety situation requiring referral, treat it as if you are in the dorm — who would you contact and how? - Observers remain silent during simulations

Questions before we begin?"

Role Players

Senior mentors or trained volunteers play the individuals in each scenario. They should be briefed in advance on: - The scenario setup and their character's motivation - Planned escalation points (complications to introduce if the participant handles the initial situation well) - When to cooperate and when to resist - Staying in character — do not break the simulation

Scenario Selection

Each participant receives 2 scenarios. Select from Category B (Mentor Challenges) and Category C (Safety Situations) from the Simulation Scenario Library in Part III of the Program Design. Recommended combinations:

Combination 1: B1 (Resistant Mentee) + C2 (Mental Health Crisis) **Combination 2:** B3 (Manipulator) + C1 (Weapon) **Combination 3:** B5 (Two Mentees in Conflict) + C4 (Staff Conflict) **Combination 4:** B2 (Boundary Test) + C3 (Gang Situation) **Combination 5:** B4 (Over-Identifier) + C2 (Mental Health Crisis)

Assign combinations so that no two adjacent participants receive the same pair. Vary the scenarios across the cohort.

Final Simulation Scoring Rubric

Minimum passing score: 16/24 per simulation (higher bar than Phase 2's 15/24)

Criteria	1 — Needs Work	2 — Developing	3 — Competent	4 — Exemplary
De-escalation	Escalated the situation or froze entirely. Made the situation worse through action or inaction.	Attempted de-escalation but was inconsistent. Some techniques used but not sustained. Partially effective.	Effectively reduced tension. Used appropriate techniques (voice, posture, space, empathy). Maintained steady approach throughout.	Masterful. Calm, strategic, and grounding to others. Read the situation accurately and adapted approach in real time. Others in the room would feel safer because of this person's presence.
Communication	Aggressive, passive, or unclear. Used language that inflamed or confused. Failed to listen actively.	Some effective techniques visible. Attempted active listening or "I" statements but inconsistently. Message was sometimes unclear.	Clear, assertive, and respectful throughout. Used active listening, reflections, and open questions. Communicated with intention and empathy.	Exceptional. Every word was chosen with purpose. Listened deeply. Reflected with precision. Tone, pace, and content all aligned. Made the other person feel genuinely heard.
Boundaries	Overstepped role (tried to be therapist, CO, or authority) or had no boundaries (agreed to everything, took on what wasn't theirs).	Boundaries were unclear or inconsistently maintained. Wavered under pressure. Recognized the line but struggled to hold it.	Maintained appropriate role throughout. Clear about what a mentor does and doesn't do. Held the line firmly but without harshness.	Modeled boundaries so naturally that they strengthened the relationship rather than straining it. Said no in a way that preserved dignity and trust.

Criteria	1 — Needs Work	2 — Developing	3 — Competent	4 — Exemplary
Resolution	No resolution attempted. Walked away, gave up, or got stuck. Left the situation worse or unresolved.	Partial resolution. Made some progress but didn't reach a workable outcome. Left loose ends or unresolved tension.	Reached a workable agreement or appropriate next step. Both parties (or the individual) had a clear path forward. Checked for agreement.	Durable solution that preserved the dignity of all involved. Resolution addressed root cause, not just the surface conflict. Follow-up plan in place.
Composure	Lost composure. Became visibly angry, frustrated, anxious, or shutdown. Own emotions drove the interaction.	Recovered after losing composure. Recognized the slip and corrected, but the break was visible and affected the dynamic.	Maintained composure throughout. Stayed regulated even under pressure. Emotional state did not negatively affect the interaction.	Composed and grounding to others. Remained centered in a way that calmed the entire situation. Demonstrated the self-regulation expected of a leader.
Referral Judgment	Failed to recognize when the situation exceeded mentor scope. Did not refer when safety was at risk. Tried to handle everything alone.	Recognized the need for referral but delayed or was uncertain about process. Hesitated when action was needed.	Recognized the limits of the mentor role and referred appropriately and timely. Knew who to contact and how. Stayed present until transition.	Proactive safety awareness. Identified risk early. Made referral decisions with confidence and clarity. Balanced the relationship with the safety obligation seamlessly.

Scoring Process: 1. Each panelist scores independently on their own rubric sheet 2. After both simulations, panelists compare scores 3. If scores differ by more than 3 points on any simulation, panelists discuss and reach consensus 4. Final score is the average of all three panelists' scores (rounded to nearest whole number)

Panel Questions (after each simulation):

Use 2-3 of the following, tailored to what was observed: - "Walk us through your thinking in the first 30 seconds. What were you assessing?" - "At what point did you decide on your approach? What informed that decision?" - "Was there a moment where you felt yourself getting activated? How did you manage that?" - "What would you do differently if you could replay that scenario?" - "If this happened in your dorm tomorrow, what would your next steps be after this conversation?" - "Where did this situation fall on the heat scale? Did your response match the level?" - "At what point, if any, did this become a referral situation? How did you make that determination?" - "How did you maintain boundaries while still showing care?"

Post-Assessment

After all participants have completed their simulations:

Facilitator:

"That's the last simulation you will ever do as a FORGE practitioner. Tomorrow — portfolio defense. Come prepared to tell your story. Not just what's in the binder. The story of who you were, who you became, and who you're committed to being.

Rest tonight. You've earned it."

Panel meets privately to finalize all simulation scores and discuss any participants whose scores are borderline. Do not share individual scores with participants today — scores will be communicated as part of the certification decision on Thursday.

Session 106 Checklist

- Panel assembled and briefed (experienced mentor, facilitator, staff if possible)
 - Simulation scenarios selected and assigned to each participant
 - Role players briefed on scenarios and escalation points
 - Room set up: panel table, performance area, observer seating
 - Timer ready
 - Scoring rubric sheets prepared (2 per participant per panelist)
 - Ground rules communicated to all participants
 - All simulations completed
 - Panel questions asked after each simulation
 - Independent scoring completed by each panelist
 - Scores compared and consensus reached where needed
 - Panel debrief completed (private)
 - No scores shared with participants today
-

SESSION 107: Portfolio Defense

Day: Wednesday **Duration:** 2+ hours (may extend based on cohort size) **Panel:** 3-person panel (may be same as Tuesday or different)

Purpose

The portfolio defense is the comprehensive review of each participant's entire FORGE journey. This is not a presentation about facts — it is a demonstration of growth, self-awareness, and readiness. The panel is evaluating: Does this person understand what they've learned? Can they articulate their growth authentically? Do they have the depth and humility to mentor others?

Defense Structure (per participant — approximately 25 minutes)

Time	Activity
0:00-0:15	Participant presentation
0:15-0:25	Panel Q&A

Presentation Guidelines

Facilitator (to the full group before defenses begin):

"Today you present your FORGE Mentor Portfolio. This is not a book report. I don't need you to read your documents to us. I need you to tell us your story.

You have 15 minutes. Here's what the panel wants to hear:

Phase 1 — Who were you? *What did you learn about yourself in Foundation? Which lessons hit the hardest? Where did you resist? Where did you break through? Show us the growth — don't just claim it.*

Phase 2 — What did you build? *What skills did you develop? What was your hardest simulation and what did you learn from it? How did you learn to teach, to facilitate, to give feedback?*

Phase 3 — What did you do? *Tell us about your mentees. Tell us about a moment in the field where everything you'd learned came together. Tell us about a moment where it didn't. Tell us what you'd do differently. Be honest — the panel can tell the difference between performance and truth.*

Your Mentor Philosophy Statement. *Read it. Or summarize it. But own it. This is who you're declaring yourself to be.*

Your Growth Narrative. *The thread that connects Week 1 to Week 36. Who were you then? Who are you now? What changed? Why?*

Then the panel will ask you questions for 10 minutes. These questions are designed to test your depth. Surface answers will not be sufficient. Answer from your experience, not from the textbook.

This is your moment. Treat it accordingly."

Panel Q&A Questions

Select from the following, based on each participant's presentation and portfolio:

On self-awareness: - "What is the biggest thinking error you still struggle with? How do you manage it?" - "Tell us about a time during Phase 3 when your own issues got in the way of your mentoring. What happened and what did you learn?" - "What would your mentees say is your greatest strength? Your greatest limitation?"

On mentoring competence: - "Describe a mentee who challenged you more than any other. What made them difficult? What did you do?" - "Walk us through a conflict you mediated in the field. What worked? What didn't?" - "How do you know when a situation is beyond your scope? Give us an example." - "How do you build trust with someone who doesn't want to be mentored?"

On commitment and character: - "Why should FORGE certify you? Not what you've done — why you?" - "What will you do in the first 30 days after certification?" - "If a certified FORGE mentor was behaving in a way that contradicted the Code of Conduct, how would you handle it?" - "What does 'Service Over Self' mean to you now — compared to what it meant in Week 1?"

On sustainability: - "How will you prevent burnout? Be specific." - "Who is your support network? How will you use them?" - "What happens when you have a bad week? Walk us through your plan."

On legacy: - "Who is the next mentor you're developing? What do you see in them?" - "What kind of culture are you building in your dorm? How do you know it's working?" - "If you could say one thing to the man you were on Day 1 of FORGE, what would it be?"

Portfolio Defense Evaluation Form

Participant Name: ____ Date: _ Panelist: ____

Criteria	1 — Insufficient	2 — Developing	3 — Satisfactory	4 — Exceptional
Portfolio completeness	Major items missing. Portfolio does not meet minimum requirements.	Most items present but some gaps or incomplete sections.	All required items present and complete. Meets all checklist requirements.	Complete and exceeds expectations. Organized, thorough, reflects sustained effort across all 3 phases.
Self-awareness and honesty	Superficial or performative. No evidence of genuine self-reflection. Claims growth without demonstrating it.	Some genuine reflection but inconsistent depth. Avoids certain topics or glosses over challenges.	Honest and self-aware. Acknowledges both growth and ongoing challenges. Demonstrates real insight into own patterns.	Deeply honest. Unflinchingly self-aware. Can articulate strengths and limitations with equal clarity. Reflection shows genuine transformation.
Articulation of growth	Cannot clearly describe personal journey. Disorganized or vague.	Describes growth in general terms but lacks specific examples or evidence.	Clearly describes the arc of growth across all 3 phases with specific examples, turning points, and evidence.	Compelling, authentic narrative of transformation. Specific, vivid, and moving. Demonstrates the kind of storytelling that inspires others.
Mentor philosophy	No clear philosophy or one that contradicts FORGE values.	Philosophy exists but is vague or borrowed. Doesn't feel personally owned.	Clear, personal philosophy that aligns with FORGE values and reflects the participant's authentic mentoring identity.	A philosophy statement that is deeply personal, clearly articulated, and demonstrates a mature understanding of mentoring and service.

Criteria	1 — Insufficient	2 — Developing	3 — Satisfactory	4 — Exceptional
Response to questions	Unable to answer panel questions substantively. Deflects, becomes defensive, or gives surface-level answers.	Answers some questions well but struggles with depth on others. May become flustered under pressure.	Answers questions thoughtfully and substantively. Draws on real experience. Maintains composure under questioning.	Handles questions with confidence, depth, and humility. Demonstrates thinking on feet. Answers reveal genuine understanding, not memorized responses.

Total Score: ___ / 20 Minimum passing score: 12/20

Panelist Notes / Recommendations:

Review Board Decision

After all portfolio defenses are complete, the panel convenes privately to make certification decisions. For each participant, the panel reviews:

1. **Final Simulation Assessment scores** (Session 106) — minimum 16/24 per simulation
2. **Portfolio Defense score** (Session 107) — minimum 12/20
3. **Session Delivery Assessment scores** (from Phase 3 field work) — 4 sessions observed, average 12/20+
4. **Mentoring hours** — minimum 60 hours documented
5. **Peer evaluations** from all three phases
6. **Facilitator assessment** — overall observation of character, growth, and readiness
7. **Code of Conduct record** — any violations during the program

Decision Criteria

CERTIFIED — Full FORGE Mentor Certification

All of the following: - Both final simulations scored 16/24 or above - Portfolio defense scored 12/20 or above - All 4 independently delivered sessions scored 12/20 or above (average) - 60+ hours of documented mentoring

- Complete portfolio with all required items - No unresolved Code of Conduct violations - Panel consensus: "This person is ready to represent FORGE independently"

CONDITIONAL — Certification Pending Remediation

One or more of the following: - One simulation scored below 16/24 (but not below 13/24) - Portfolio defense scored 10-11/20 - One or more session delivery scores below threshold - Minor portfolio gaps that can be completed within 2 weeks - Panel has specific concerns that can be addressed with a defined plan

Conditional participants receive: - A written remediation plan identifying specific areas to address - A timeline (typically 2-4 weeks) - A reassessment opportunity on the specific areas identified - Continued access to supervision during the remediation period - No shame — this is a growth timeline, not a failure

NOT YET READY — May Re-Enter Phase 3 with Next Cohort

One or more of the following: - Both simulations scored below 16/24 - Portfolio defense scored below 10/20 - Significant portfolio gaps that cannot be completed quickly - Mentoring hours significantly below 60 - Panel consensus: safety or character concerns that require additional development - Unresolved Code of Conduct issues

Not Yet Ready participants receive: - An honest, compassionate conversation about what was observed - Specific feedback on areas needing development - An invitation to re-enter Phase 3 with the next cohort (not starting over from Phase 1) - Affirmation that this is not failure — it is a different timeline - Continued participation in FORGE community (not excluded)

Facilitator note: *The "Not Yet Ready" conversation is one of the hardest things a facilitator will do. Handle it with absolute honesty and absolute care. This person has invested 9 months. Respect that investment while being truthful about readiness. Do not certify someone who is not ready — it undermines every certified mentor and ultimately harms the people they would serve.*

Decision Documentation

For each participant, the panel completes:

Review Board Decision Form

Participant Name: ____ **Date:** ____

Simulation 1 Score: ____ / 24 **Simulation 2 Score:** ____ / 24 **Portfolio Defense Score:** ____ / 20 **Session Delivery Average:** ____ / 20 **Mentoring Hours Documented:** ____ hours **Portfolio Complete:** Yes / No (if no, list missing items) **Code of Conduct Violations:** None / Described below

Panel Decision: CERTIFIED / CONDITIONAL / NOT YET READY

If Conditional — Remediation Plan:

Remediation Deadline: ___ **Reassessment Date:** _____

If Not Yet Ready — Specific Feedback:

Recommended Plan: _____

Panel Signatures: 1. _____ (*Experienced Mentor*) 2. _____ (Facilitator) 3. _____ (Staff Member / Third Panelist)

Session 107 Checklist

- Panel assembled and briefed
- All participants' portfolios reviewed by panel (at least briefly) in advance
- Presentation guidelines communicated to all participants
- All portfolio defenses completed
- Portfolio Defense Evaluation Forms completed for each participant
- Panel Q&A completed for each participant
- Panel convened privately after all defenses
- Review Board Decision Forms completed for each participant
- Certification decisions reached for all participants
- Conditional participants identified with remediation plans drafted
- Not Yet Ready participants identified (if any) with feedback prepared
- Decisions documented and signed by all panelists
- Graduation preparation confirmed for Thursday
- Certificates prepared for all certified participants

SESSION 108: Graduation and Commissioning

Day: Thursday **Duration:** 2 hours **Setting:** The most dignified room available. Chairs arranged in a circle or semicircle. Clean, intentional, respectful. **Attendees:** All cohort members, panel members, senior mentors, any staff supporters, chaplain (if available), facility administration (if willing)

Purpose

This is the culmination of 9 months. 108 sessions. 216 hours. More thinking reports, journal entries, simulations, and honest conversations than most of these men have had in their entire lives. This ceremony must be worthy of what they endured to get here. It is not a formality. It is a commissioning — a sending forth. Do not rush it. Do not diminish it. These men earned every moment of this day.

Graduation Ceremony Script

Room Setup (30 minutes before)

- Chairs in a circle or semicircle
- Talking piece placed in the center
- Certificates arranged in order (face down or in folders)
- Any institutional flags or FORGE banners displayed
- If possible, a small table at the front for certificate presentation
- Water available for participants and guests
- Room clean, orderly, intentional — the space should communicate respect

Pre-Ceremony (5 minutes)

As participants and guests arrive, facilitator greets each person individually. No rushing. This day starts with presence.

When everyone is seated:

I. Opening (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Welcome. To our graduates. To our panel members. To the senior mentors who walked this road before you. To any staff and administrators who chose to be here today — thank you. Your presence means something. Today we are here to do something that does not happen often enough in this facility — or in this system. We are here to recognize men who chose to change. Not because they were forced. Not because they were rewarded. Because they decided — 9 months ago — that they wanted to be different. And they did the work to make it real.

Nine months. Thirty-six weeks. One hundred and eight sessions. Hundreds of hours of learning, practicing, failing, trying again, journaling, sitting in circles, having hard conversations, looking in the mirror and not looking away. That's what it took. And every man sitting in this circle today did it."

Pause.

"Thirty-five weeks ago, in the very first session of FORGE, I asked each of you a question. I said:

'Name one thing you want to be different about yourself in 9 months.'

Some of you said patience. Some said being a better father. Some said controlling your temper. Some said being someone worth respecting. I asked you to write it down and keep it.

Today I want you to hold that answer in your mind. Because in a few minutes, we're going to come back to it. And the distance between what you said then and who you are now — that distance is called transformation. And you didn't just hope for it. You built it. Session by session. Choice by choice. Day by day."

II. The FORGE Journey — Reflection (15 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Before we present certificates, I want to take a moment to honor the journey.

Let me walk you back through what you endured — because 'endured' is the right word. This program was designed to be hard. And it was."

Phase 1 — Foundation: "Know Yourself" (Weeks 1-12)

"In Phase 1, we asked you to look at yourself honestly. For many of you, that was the hardest thing you've ever done.

You learned about thinking errors — and had to admit you had them. All of them. You learned about emotions — and had to feel ones you'd been burying for years. You wrote impact awareness letters and faced what your choices had cost other people. You sat in circles and heard men share things they'd never said out loud.

Phase 1 wasn't about learning skills. It was about demolition. Tearing down the walls you built to protect yourself — walls that also kept you trapped. Some of you nearly quit during Phase 1. The fact that you didn't is the first proof of who you're becoming."

Phase 2 — Development: "Build Others" (Weeks 13-24)

"In Phase 2, we turned you outward. You learned to teach, facilitate, and listen. You practiced motivational interviewing. You ran community circles. You wrote lesson plans. You stood in front of this group and facilitated sessions — and received honest feedback.

And then the simulations. You walked into scenarios that would make most people freeze or explode. Weapons. Mental health crises. Manipulation. Conflicts with no clean answer. And you didn't just survive them — you learned from them. Every freeze, every stumble, every replay made you sharper.

Phase 2 asked you to become something you'd never been: a builder of other people."

Phase 3 — Practicum: "Lead and Serve" (Weeks 25-36)

"In Phase 3, we let go of the safety net. You mentored real people with real problems. You facilitated real sessions. You ran community circles in dorms where nobody asked for them. You worked with mentees who tested your patience, your boundaries, and your commitment.

You learned about sustainability — because this work takes a toll. You learned about developing other leaders — because FORGE cannot depend on any one person. You wrote your mentor philosophy statements — and declared who you are, not who you're trying to be.

Phase 3 proved that you can do this. Not in a classroom. In the real world."

III. Individual Recognition and Certificate Presentation (30-40 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Now I'm going to do something I've been looking forward to for a long time. I'm going to call each of you forward, one at a time. And I'm going to say something about who you are — not what's on your record, not what label this system gave you. Who you are."

For each graduate:

1. Facilitator calls the person by name
2. Graduate stands and comes to the front (or center of the circle)
3. Facilitator delivers a personal recognition — 3-5 sentences specific to that individual
4. Certificate is presented
5. Handshake or appropriate acknowledgment
6. The group acknowledges (applause, words of affirmation — whatever is natural)

Personal recognition examples (facilitator must prepare these in advance for each graduate — these are the most important words of the ceremony):

"[Name], when you walked in here 9 months ago, you told me you didn't think you had anything worth offering. Today you have three mentees who would tell you you're wrong. You showed up every single week. You never missed a session. You never cut corners. And that simulation in Week 23 — when you talked a man through a crisis that reminded you of your own — I watched you choose someone else's pain over your own comfort. That's not something you learned in a textbook. That's who you are. Congratulations."

"[Name], you were the biggest skeptic in this cohort. Week 2, you looked me in the eye and said, 'This is never going to work.' I'm glad you stayed long enough to prove yourself wrong. Your honesty — the same honesty that made you a skeptic — is what makes you a great mentor. You don't perform. You don't pretend. What people get from you is real. And in here, real is the most valuable thing there is. Congratulations."

"[Name], I watched you go from a man who couldn't sit in a circle without shutting down to a man who facilitates them. Your circles in [dorm/unit] became the place where men felt safe enough to be honest. You built that. Not me. Not the program. You. And the fact that you still get nervous before every session — don't lose that. That nervousness means you care. Congratulations."

Facilitator must write personalized recognitions for every graduate. These cannot be generic. Each person needs to hear something specific that proves they were truly seen.

IV. Public Commitment to Service (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Certification comes with a commitment. Not a requirement imposed on you — a commitment you make freely, in front of these witnesses.

FORGE asks every certified mentor to commit to 6 months of active service after certification. That means:

- *Maintaining a mentoring caseload of 3-5 mentees*
- *Facilitating at least 2 sessions per month*
- *Running at least 1 community circle per month*
- *Participating in monthly supervision*
- *Continuing your own growth — journaling, self-assessment, learning*
- *Upholding the Code of Conduct at all times*
- *Developing the next generation of mentors*

This is not a formality. This is a covenant with the men who will come after you. They need what you have. They need what you've become. And they're counting on you to still be standing when they need you.

If you are willing to make this commitment, I'm going to ask you to stand, state your name, and say the words."

Distribute Commitment to Service forms.

One at a time, each graduate stands:

Graduate:

"My name is [full name]. I commit to 6 months of active service as a FORGE Mentor. I will serve with integrity, maintain my own growth, and develop others to do the same. I make this commitment freely, because this work matters — and because the men who come after me deserve a mentor who shows up."

After each commitment: witnesses (panel, senior mentors, staff) acknowledge with a nod or word of affirmation.

After all commitments are made:

Facilitator:

"These commitments are witnessed and recorded. They are not words on paper. They are promises to real people — some of whom haven't arrived yet. Honor them."

Collect signed Commitment to Service forms.

V. The Charge (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Stand up. All of you. Graduates, mentors, guests — everyone.

I want to give you the FORGE charge. These are the words that every certified FORGE mentor carries with them."

Pause. Wait until everyone is standing and the room is completely silent.

Facilitator (slowly, with weight):

"You are FORGE Mentors.

You were not selected for this because you were perfect. You were selected because you were willing. Willing to look at yourself honestly. Willing to change. Willing to serve.

The world you came from — and the system you're in — told you that you were disposable. That you were your worst moment. That you had nothing to offer.

You proved that wrong. Not with words. With work.

From this day forward, you carry a responsibility. Not to a program. To the men around you who are still where you were 9 months ago — scared, angry, lost, pretending to be fine. They need someone to show them that change is possible. That need is now yours to fill.

You will have hard days. Days when a mentee relapses. Days when the system is unjust. Days when you question everything. On those days, remember this room. Remember this circle. Remember the men standing next to you. Remember what you built.

And remember this:

Leadership is not granted. It is forged.

You were forged. Now go build others."

VI. Welcome into the FORGE Mentor Community (5 minutes)

Facilitator:

"Senior mentors — the men who walked this road before this cohort — please step forward."

Senior mentors (certified FORGE mentors from previous cohorts, if any) step forward and face the new graduates.

Facilitator:

"These men are your brothers in service. They've been where you are today. They've done this work. They know what's coming. And they are here to welcome you into a community that doesn't end when the ceremony does.

To our new mentors: you are no longer alone. You are part of something. Something bigger than any one of us. Something that will outlast all of us — if we build it right."

Senior mentors greet each new graduate individually — handshake, word of encouragement, whatever is natural and authentic. If this is the first cohort and there are no senior mentors yet:

Facilitator:

"You are the first. There are no senior mentors ahead of you — because you are the foundation. Every mentor who comes after you will stand on what you build. Every dorm that changes will trace back to this day, this group, this decision. You are the beginning. Make it count."

VII. Closing Circle (10 minutes)

Facilitator:

"One last circle. Sit down. Talking piece in the center.

We started this program 35 weeks ago with a question. The very last exercise of Session 1 — I asked you:

'Name one thing you want to be different about yourself in 9 months.'

Now we're here. Nine months later. So here's the final question — the last question of this program:

'What is different?'

Not what you learned. Not what you did. What is different about who you are? Take the talking piece and tell this circle."

Send the talking piece around. Let every person speak. Do not rush. Do not interrupt. This is the most important circle of the entire program.

Facilitator (receiving the talking piece last):

"What I see in this circle — right now — is proof that people change. Not a theory about it. Proof. Living, breathing, standing proof.

The world doesn't believe that. Most people don't believe that. But I've watched it happen in this room for 9 months.

You are the evidence.

Go be the evidence for someone else.

FORGE — Session 108. The last session. Dismissed."

VIII. Post-Ceremony

Informal fellowship time — allow graduates, mentors, panel members, and guests to interact informally. This is a celebration. Let it be one.

Administrative tasks (facilitator handles privately): - Secure all signed Commitment to Service forms - File all Review Board Decision Forms - Schedule remediation plan follow-ups for any conditional certifications - Conduct individual conversations with any "Not Yet Ready" participants (with care and privacy) - Update program records - Distribute Post-Certification Expectations handout to all graduates

Post-Certification Expectations

Distribute to all certified graduates at the end of the ceremony.

FORGE Certified Mentor — Ongoing Requirements

Your 6-Month Active Service Commitment:

Requirement	Frequency	Minimum
Mentoring caseload	Ongoing	3-5 mentees
Session facilitation	Monthly	2 sessions per month
Community circles	Monthly	1 circle per month
Supervision attendance	Monthly	1 session per month

Requirement	Frequency	Minimum
Mentoring log updates	Monthly	Submitted by last day of month
Self-assessment	Quarterly	Written reflection on strengths and growth areas
Self-care plan compliance	Ongoing	Follow your Personal Sustainability Plan

Ongoing Development: - Attend monthly mentor meetings (fellowship, planning, continued learning) - Read at least 1 book from the recommended reading list per quarter - Identify and begin developing at least 1 potential future mentor - Participate in training the next FORGE cohort when Phase 1 begins - Seek feedback regularly — from mentees, fellow mentors, and facilitators

Annual Recertification: - Refresher training session (4 hours) - Performance review with facilitator - Updated self-assessment - Mentoring hours log review - Peer evaluation - Continued compliance with Code of Conduct

Decertification: Certification may be revoked for: - Code of Conduct violations (per existing policy) - Sustained inactivity (3+ months without fulfilling service commitment) - Failure to maintain standards of conduct expected of a FORGE mentor - Refusal to participate in supervision or ongoing development

Important: Decertification is not punishment. It is protection — for you and for the people you serve. If you're struggling, ask for help before it reaches that point. That's what the community is for.

Session 108 Checklist

- Room set up with dignity and intention (30 min before)
- Certificates prepared and arranged
- Talking piece placed
- Guests welcomed and seated
- Opening delivered
- FORGE journey reflection completed (all 3 phases)
- Individual recognition prepared for EVERY graduate (personalized — not generic)
- Certificates presented to each graduate individually
- Commitment to Service read and signed by each graduate
- Commitment forms collected
- The Charge delivered: "Leadership is not granted. It is forged."
- Senior mentor welcome conducted (or first-cohort founding statement delivered)
- Final closing circle completed — revisited Week 1's closing question
- Post-Certification Expectations handout distributed

- Informal fellowship time allowed
- Conditional/Not Yet Ready conversations scheduled (if applicable)
- All administrative paperwork completed and filed



FACILITATOR NOTES FOR WEEK 36

Preparation Is Everything

This week cannot be improvised. Every element must be prepared in advance.

For Session 106 (Simulations): - The panel must be identified and confirmed no later than the previous Friday - Scenarios should be selected, role players briefed, and logistics confirmed by Monday - Have backup scenarios in case a participant has already encountered their assigned scenario during training - The room must feel formal — this is an assessment, not a practice session

For Session 107 (Portfolio Defense): - Review portfolios in advance, even briefly — knowing what's in each portfolio allows better questions - Panel questions should be tailored to the individual, not generic - Allow adequate time — rushing a defense disrespects the work

For Session 108 (Graduation): - The personal recognitions are the most important preparation. Write them in advance. Make them specific. These men may never hear anything like this again. Make every word count. - The ceremony script should be practiced — not memorized word for word, but familiar enough that you can deliver it with presence, not nervousness - Coordinate with administration early — any needed approvals, room reservations, or guest clearances take time

The "Not Yet Ready" Conversation

If any participant receives a "Not Yet Ready" decision, this conversation must happen before the ceremony — privately, with compassion, and with a clear plan.

"I want to be straight with you. The panel reviewed your assessment and your portfolio, and we don't believe you're ready for certification yet. That is not the same as saying you failed. It means your timeline is different. Here's specifically what we observed: [provide clear, specific feedback].

Here's what we recommend: [re-enter Phase 3 with the next cohort / specific remediation].

You have invested 9 months in this program. That investment is not lost. Everything you've learned is still yours. The growth you've achieved is real. What we're saying is that there's more growth needed before you carry the FORGE Mentor title — because that title has to mean something. To you and to the people you'll serve.

You are welcome at the ceremony today. You are part of this cohort. You completed the program. You are not being excluded or punished. You are being told: not yet. And 'not yet' is not 'never.'"

After the Ceremony

The work doesn't end. In the days following graduation:

1. **File all certification documentation** — Review Board Decision Forms, simulation scores, portfolio defense evaluations, commitment forms
2. **Schedule first post-certification supervision session** — within 2 weeks of graduation
3. **Assign mentoring areas** — confirm dorm assignments and mentee matches for newly certified mentors
4. **Begin next cohort planning** — if a new Phase 1 cohort is starting, integrate new mentors into the training pipeline
5. **Follow up on conditional certifications** — ensure remediation plans are active and supported
6. **Communicate outcomes** to facility administration — number certified, program completion data, next steps
7. **Take care of yourself** — facilitators experience their own version of post-program depletion. You just gave 9 months to these men. Rest. Reflect. Prepare for the next cohort.

A Final Note to the Facilitator

You just guided a group of men through one of the most intensive personal development programs in any correctional facility in the country. Some of them came to you angry. Some came broken. Some came skeptical. All of them left different.

That happened because of the program — but it also happened because of you. The curriculum is important. The structure matters. But what makes FORGE work is a facilitator who shows up, tells the truth, holds the standard, and refuses to give up on anyone.

Whatever happens next — whether this cohort transforms a dorm, or a unit, or an entire facility — it started here. In a circle. With a talking piece. With men who chose to be honest.

Leadership is not granted. It is forged.

And so are the people who forge it.